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SELECTIONS FROM CARLYLE

SARTOR RESARTUS
THE FRENCH REVOLUTION
PAST AND PRESENT

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE selections from CARLYLE'S *Sartor Resartus*, *French Revolution*, and *Past and Present* contained in this volume are designed to give the general reader a fair impression of the nature and scope of these works. The Introduction deals chiefly with the circumstances attending the composition and publication of these three books, but includes also brief critical discussions of the works themselves. In view of the many biographical sketches of CARLYLE, it has been deemed unnecessary to add to their number in this volume.

Those who have had experience in teaching CARLYLE'S *French Revolution* to college undergraduates must have felt the need of an edition provided with historical summaries and explanatory notes. Few historical works presuppose such an extensive knowledge of history on the part of the ordinary reader. Professor SEYMOUR'S summaries and notes will fill, we hope, a very specific need.

S. B. H.

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INTRODUCTION

SARTOR RESARTUS

IN the Journal of Ralph Waldo Emerson for August, 1833, is the following entry: "Thomas Carlyle lives in the Parish of Dunscore, sixteen miles from Dumfries, amid wild and desolate heathery hills, and without a single companion in this region out of his own house. There he has his wife, a most accomplished and agreeable woman. Truth and peace and faith dwell with them and beautify them. I never saw more amiableness than in his countenance. He speaks broad Scotch with evident relish." At the time of Emerson's visit, the Carlyles had been living at Craigenputtock, Mrs. Carlyle's modest ancestral farm, for five years. During these years, and in these surroundings, Carlyle had written his first and most personal book, *Sartor Resartus*. The quiet and peace and isolation of the life at Craigenputtock led naturally to much philosophical musing and introspection, and resulted in this spiritual autobiography, which contains the first statement of most of the beliefs and teachings of Thomas Carlyle. "It contains more of my opinions on Art, Politics, Religion, Heaven, Earth, and Air," he writes to his publisher in 1833, "than all things I have yet written. The Creed promulgated on all these things is *Mine* and firmly believed."

Carlyle's letters to his mother and to his brother, dated October, 1830, contain the first references to the projected book, and give, as well, a glimpse of the life and the mind of the author during the months of its composition. To his mother he writes: "The wife and I are very quiet here, and accustoming ourselves, as fast as we can, to the stillness of winter, which is fast coming on. . . . We are all in God's hand; otherwise this world, which is but wholly a valley of

the Shadow of Death, were too frightful. Let us *hope*; we are in 'the Place of Hope'; our Life is a Hope. But far better than all reasonings for cheerfulness is the diligence I use in following my daily Business. For the last three weeks I have been writing by task-work again, and get along wonderfully well: what it is to be I cannot yet tell, whether a Book or a string of Magazine Articles; we hope the former; but in either case it may be worth something." To his brother, Dr. Carlyle, he writes: "For myself here I am leading the stillest life; musing amid the pale sunshine or rude winds . . . when I go walking in this almost ghastly solitude; and for the rest, writing with impetuosity. What I am writing at is the strangest of all things. . . . A very singular piece, I assure you! It glances from Heaven to Earth and back again in a strange satirical frenzy, whether *fine* or not remains to be seen."

From the first, Carlyle had a sure faith in the greatness of his Book, although he realized also that "fools would not receive it gladly." "I *have* a Book in me that will cause ears to tingle," he writes in December, 1830; and in July, 1831: "I think that the world will in no wise be enraptured, . . . that the critical republic will cackle vituperatively or perhaps maintain total silence: *à la bonne heure*. It was the best I had in me; what God had given me, what the Devil shall not take away." Six weeks of unsuccessful haggling with London publishers only confirmed his own faith in his Book. He writes to his wife from London in September, 1831: "That the poor Book is worth something I feel more and more convinced; that it will ever bring us any money seems less and less likely! Thank God that we have been able to write it, and to write it *gratis*." Two weeks later he writes to his mother in similar strain: "The Giver of all Good has enabled me to write the thing and also to do *without* any pay for it." The Book was begun in September, 1830, finished in July, 1831, and after being rejected by several publishers, was sold at reduced rates to James Fraser who printed it in serial form in *Fraser's Magazine* for 1833-4.

"A heap of clotted nonsense" is a typical comment of the first reviewers of *Sartor*. It was not only "caviare to the general," which Carlyle must have anticipated, but it caused even the judicious to grieve. "James Fraser writes me that the Book meets with the most unqualified disapproval; which is all extremely proper. His payment arrives, which is still more proper," Carlyle reports to his brother in January, 1834. But within the lifetime of these first reviewers and critics, *Sartor Resartus* was accepted as an English classic, and — what is still more strange — it achieved the somewhat rare distinction of becoming a popular classic. The reason for the public's change of attitude is not far to seek. In 1833 the British reading public had learned neither to read the English style since labelled "Carlylese" nor to understand Carlylean doctrines. *Sartor* is "the strangest of all things," certainly the strangest of all Carlyle's books — fantastic, grotesque, explosive, almost incoherent at times. It is only after passing an apprenticeship in some of Carlyle's later works — *The French Revolution* and *Heroes*, for example — that the reader returns to *Sartor* with appreciation and understanding.

But there were three heroic souls, blessed with "the seeing eye," who immediately recognized true greatness even in strange and unfamiliar form: Jane Welsh Carlyle, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Father O'Shea, an Irish priest of Cork. "A work of genius, dear," was Mrs. Carlyle's pronouncement. "My American friend bids me go on in God's name," Carlyle informs his mother in August, 1834, "for in remotest nooks in the distant ends of the earth, men are listening to me and loving me. . . . The vain chatter of fools, either for or against, is worth *nothing*, but the hearty response of one earnest man is very precious." Even Emerson, however, was at first baffled by the style of *Sartor*: "Evermore thanks for the brave stand you have made for Spiritualism in these writings. But has literature any parallel to the oddity of the vehicle chosen to convey the treasure? . . . Did ever wise and philanthropic author use so defying a diction? As if society were not sufficiently

shy of truth without providing it beforehand with an objection to the form" (Letter of May 14, 1834).

The next spring, comes an appeal from America, voiced by Emerson, for fifty or a hundred copies of *Sartor*: "The lovers of *Sartor* are sufficiently enthusiastic here," Emerson writes, "I am an icicle to them. They think England blind and deaf." To this Carlyle replies: "As for Fraser, the idea of a new edition is frightful to him, or rather ludicrous, unimaginable. Of him no man has enquired for a *Sartor*. . . . He shrieks at the idea. Accordingly I realized these four copies from him, and can do no more." America asked for a hundred copies of *Sartor* and received four copies of the *Sartor* sheets from Fraser's Magazine. The result was that the first edition of *Sartor Resartus* in book form appeared in America in April, 1836, and the whole edition, 500 copies, was sold out in the following September. Two years after the first edition, *Sartor* appeared in England. "Poor fellow," writes Carlyle in June, 1838, "he has had a sore struggle to get out here, some seven years or more; but having started up in Yankeeland they were forced to let him out here; he would not keep down — Good luck to him, we will say; — though perhaps he is no great shakes after all, poor fellow."

Sartor Resartus (the tailor repatched) professes to be an edition of the Life and Opinions of Herr Diogenes Teufelsdröckh (God-begotten Devil's-dung), Professor of Things in General at the University of Weissnichtwo (Know-not-where), with an exposition of his Philosophy of Clothes. Book I is devoted chiefly to the Clothes Philosophy, Book II to the biography of Teufelsdröckh, and Book III to his opinions, religious, political, sociological, and the like. There is on record but one man who possessed so literal a mind that he could not detect this literary fiction; he was, perhaps, a descendant of the Irish bishop who professed disbelief in most of the adventures of Gulliver.

The Philosophy of Clothes was undoubtedly suggested to Carlyle by the following passage from Swift's *Tale of a Tub* (Section ii):

"The worshippers of this deity had also a system of their belief which seemed to turn upon the following fundamentals. They held the universe to be a large suit of clothes which invests everything: that the earth is invested by the air; the air is invested by the stars; and the stars are invested by the *primum mobile*. Look on this globe of earth, you will find it to be a very complete and fashionable dress. What is that which some call land, but a fine coat faced with green? or the sea, but a waistcoat of water-tabby? . . . To conclude from all, what is man himself but a micro-coat, or rather a complete suit of clothes with all its trimmings? As to his body, there can be no dispute: but examine even the acquirements of his mind, you will find them all contribute in their order toward furnishing an exact dress: to instance no more; is not religion a cloak; honesty a pair of shoes worn out in the dirt; self-love a surtout; vanity a shirt; and conscience a pair of breeches; which, though a cover for lewdness as well as nastiness, is easily slipt down for the service of both."

This grotesque fancy of Swift's is combined by Carlyle with the idealistic philosophy of Fichte. Ruthless satire, warm human sympathy, and lofty idealism are found, side by side, in *Sartor*. "The grand unparalleled peculiarity of Teufelsdröckh," writes the author,¹ "is, that with all this Descendentalism he combines a Transcendentalism, no less superlative; whereby if on the one hand he degrade man below most animals, he, on the other, exalts him beyond the visible Heavens, almost to an equality with the Gods." The reader of *Sartor* must bear in mind these two opposing elements in the book — Descendentalism and Transcendentalism.²

Clothes, in *Sartor*, are in the first place the symbol of external appearances, "formulas," conventional modes of thought, shams, all things, in fact, which hide from eyes of men underlying realities. Teufelsdröckh is the heroic soul whose vision pierces through external appearances and sees things as they are, not as they seem to be (cf. for example, Book I, chap. 4, on page 6). The true thinker's hunger and thirst for Truth, naked Truth, without "adven-

¹ *Sartor Resartus*, I, 10.

² An excellent exposition may be found in W. S. Johnson's *Thomas Carlyle 1814-1831*, Yale University Press, 1911.

titious wrappages" — this is the Descendentalism or Sansculottism¹ of *Sartor*.

The noblest expression of Descendentalism in English literature is to be found in King Lear's mighty speech in the storm, when he sees the naked Edgar²: "Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou owest the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! here's three on's are sophisticated. Thou art the thing itself: unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare forked animal as thou art. Off! Off! You lendings! Come, unbutton here. (*Tearing off his clothes.*)" Lear has lived all his life on shams and false appearances; terrible disillusionment has followed; his desire for Truth and Sincerity becomes so great that in his semi-madness, and with majestic symbolism, he tears from his body his royal robes, that he may become, like "Poor Tom," the Thing Itself. With this Sansculottism come Lear's matchless words of sympathy for the "poor, naked wretches"³ of the world; and with the Sansculottism of *Sartor* come exquisite passages on human brotherhood.⁴

But this "poor forked animal," this "omnivorous biped that wears breeches" is also "a Soul, a Spirit, a Divine Apparition." Man's Body is but the temporary Garment of his Spirit. "We *are* such stuff as Dreams are made on." Here is the Transcendentalism of *Sartor*. Men are but "Souls rendered visible: in Bodies that took shape and will lose it, melting into air. Their solid Pavement is a Picture of the Sense; they walk on the bosom of Nothing."

The Selections from Book II of *Sartor*, in this edition, include the most important autobiographical sections. Carlyle has warned us that they are to be taken "not literally, but mythically." A full discussion of all the autobiographical details in *Sartor* is appended to the edition of *The Love Letters of Thomas Carlyle and Jane Welsh*. The two central chapters of the Book — chapters written with

¹ See note, p. 12.

² *King Lear*, iii. 4.

³ *King Lear*, iii. 4.

⁴ *Everlasting Yea*, pp. 31-35 and *Helotage*, pp. 40-42.

such marvellous fidelity to human experience and with such passionate spiritual earnestness that they have been called the Gospel according to Thomas Carlyle — are the *Everlasting No* and the *Everlasting Yea*. In the former we watch Carlyle's own terrible struggle with the spirit of denial, scepticism, and materialism, and his eventual "fire-eyed Defiance" of "all that the Devil or Man may, will, or can do against him." In the *Everlasting Yea* we watch the development of positive spiritual faith, and the final peace which comes through understanding.

The Selections from Book III include the chapter on *Helotage*, which contains the germ of Carlyle's later sociological teachings, and which gives a glimpse of the tenderness and sympathy of the man whose social program was often attacked for its hardness and cruelty. The chapter on *Natural Supernaturalism* is perhaps Carlyle's most clear and concise statement of his Transcendental Philosophy.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

"I should not have known what to make of this world at all, if it had not been for the French Revolution," once said Carlyle, who saw in that great social upheaval a dramatic confirmation of some of his most precious theories of life and of history. An age of burning, passionate faith in the Rights and Might of Man is seen supplanting an age of scepticism, doubt, and paralysis of action. Shams give way to Facts, Names to Realities, Quacks to Heroes. Which is the real King of France, Louis the Weakling or Mirabeau the Titan? Was the French Revolution an accident that might have been prevented or was it the inevitable result of the years that preceded it? Does Right eventually make Might? Is the Great Man the creature of his Times? Conclusive and convincing answers to these familiar questions Carlyle found in the French Revolution. "We will hail the French Revolution, then, as ship-wrecked mariners might the sternest rock, in a world otherwise all of baseless sea and waves. A true Apocalypse, though a terrible one,

to the false artificial times, testifying once more that Nature is *preternatural*; if not divine, then diabolic; that Semblance is not Reality; that is has to become Reality or the world will take-fire under it — burn it into what it is, namely Nothing. Plausibility has ended; empty routine has ended; much has ended. This as with the Trump of Doom has been proclaimed to all men.”¹ The French Revolution is to Carlyle a second Ragnarök, in which society is regenerated by a fiery Death-Birth.

Carlyle's interest in eighteenth century France began apparently during the autumn of 1831, while he was in London seeking a publisher for *Sartor* and preparing to write an essay on Diderot. His eighteenth century studies were continued in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, during the first four months of 1833, which the dreary winter at Craigenputtock forced the Carlyles to spend in town. During this winter he was undecided whether his new book should be on The French Revolution or on John Knox and the Reformation in Scotland, but the next autumn (Oct. 1, 1833) he wrote his brother: “One of the subjects that engages me most is the French Revolution, which indeed for us is still the subject of subjects. My chief errand to Paris were freer enquiry into this; one day, if this mood continue, I may have something of my own to say on it.”

In June, 1834, the Carlyles took up their permanent abode in Chelsea, then a suburb of London, and Fraser, the publisher, was at once consulted about the proposed book. He agreed to publish it “for half-profits, that is *zero*,” and Carlyle proposes ‘very soon with all his heart to address himself’ to this new undertaking. The summer of 1834 was spent in bewildering investigations of his subject: “The French Revolution, alas, perplexes me much. More *Books* are but a repetition of those before read. I can learn nothing further from Books and yet I am as far as possible from understanding it.”² To Emerson, a few

¹ *Hero as King*, (ed. Adams, p. 280; ed. Murch, p. 217).

² Letter to Dr. Carlyle, Aug. 15, 1834.

days before, he had written: "I am studying with all my might for a Book on the French Revolution. It is part of my creed that the only Poetry is History, could we but tell it right."

The first volume was finished in February, 1835, after five months of slow and painful labour. The actual composition of a book seems to have caused Carlyle untold agony: "I sit down to write, there is not an idea discernible in the head of me; one dull cloud of pain and stupidity. . . . I go floundering along."¹ The fate of this first version of Volume I is well known; let us listen to Carlyle's own account of it.² "(John Stuart) Mill had borrowed the first volume of my poor *French Revolution* that he might write some observations on it. I was busy meanwhile with Volume Second, working like a *Nigger*, but with the heart of a free Roman: indeed I had not felt so clear and independent, sure of myself and of my task, for many long years. Well, one night about three weeks ago, we sat at tea, and Mill's short rap was heard at the door. Jane rose to welcome him; but he stood there unresponsive, pale, the very picture of despair. . . . After some considerable gasping, I learned from Mill this fact: that my poor Manuscript, all except some four tattered leaves, was *annihilated!* He had left it out (too carelessly); it had been taken for waste paper: and so five months of as tough labour as I could remember of, were gone like a whiff of smoke — There never in my life had come upon me any other *accident* of much moment; but this I could not but feel to be a hard one. The thing was lost, and perhaps worse; for I had not only forgotten all the structure of it, but the spirit it was written with was past. . . . Mill, whom I had to comfort and speak peace to, remained injudiciously enough till almost midnight, and my poor Jane and I had to sit talking of indifferent matters; and could not till then get our lament freely uttered. She was very good to me; and the thing did not

¹ Letter to Sterling, Oct. 3, 1836.

² Letter to Dr. Carlyle, Mar. 23, 1835. Cf. also letters to his Mother, Mar. 25, 1835, and to Emerson, May 13, 1835.

beat us. I felt in general that I was as a little schoolboy, who had laboriously written out his *Copy* as he could, and was showing it not without Satisfaction to his Master: but lo! the Master had suddenly torn it, saying: 'No, boy, thou must go and write it *better*.' What could I do but sorrowing go and try to obey." It is needless to comment on the noble resignation, and courage, and unselfishness with which Carlyle faced this "accident." "Mill, whom I had to comfort," "The thing did not beat us," "No, boy, thou must go and write it better": it is such phrases as these that give the lie to the popular conception of Carlyle as a self-centered, growling monster.

Mill offered Carlyle £200 as partial compensation for his loss, and Carlyle reluctantly accepted half the amount, "that he might be kept alive to work more." The night that followed Mill's visit was a hard one: "something from time to time tying me tight all round the region of the heart, and strange dreams haunting me: however, I was not without good thoughts, too, that came like healing life into me." The next morning he began afresh with courage and resolution, but the task which had cost five months of agony before, now occupied seven very black months of Carlyle's life. The new version of Volume I was at length completed in the autumn of 1835. "The rest will be child's play in comparison. My Teufelsdröckh humour of looking through the clothes finds considerable scope here." ¹

But it was not all to be child's play. Another year passes and the work is not yet done. "My one wish is to have the miserable rubbish washed off my hands: the sole blessedness I expect or desire from it is that of being done with it." ² "The joy I anticipate in finishing the Book is considerable. Go, thou unhappy Book, that hast nearly wrung the life out of me; go, in God's name or the Devil's! One will be free after that, and look abroad over the world to see what it holds for one." ³ On January 12, 1837, "on a damp even-

¹ To Dr. Carlyle, Sept. 23, 1835.

² To Rev. J. Sterling, Sept. 11, 1836.

³ To Dr. Carlyle, Sept. 12, 1836.

ing, just as light was failing”¹ Carlyle handed the MS. to his wife with these words: “I know not whether this Book is worth anything, nor what the world will do with it, or misdo, or entirely forbear to do, as is likeliest: but this I could tell the world: You have not had for a hundred years any book that comes more direct and flaming from the heart of a living man.”

The publication of *The French Revolution* brought Carlyle from obscurity into fame. He was henceforth a man to reckon with in English literature. His Book perplexed, irritated, baffled many of his eminent contemporaries, but even those who disagreed with him most vigorously were forced to admit “that there had arisen a new star, of baleful and perhaps ominous aspect, but a star of the first magnitude.”² Thackeray reviewed the Book for the *London Times*,³ and the mixture of enthusiastic admiration and complete bewilderment in this review is both amusing and instructive. He finds the style “astonishing to the admirers of simple Addisonian English, to those who love history as it gracefully runs in Hume, or struts pompously in Gibbon. But the reader speedily learns to admire and sympathize; just as he would admire a Gothic cathedral *in spite of* ⁴ the quaint carvings and hideous images on door and buttress.” The comparison with Gothic architecture is suggestive, though the phrase ‘in spite of’ in this connection has a strange sound to modern ears. Emerson makes a similar criticism and comparison⁵: “I insist, of course, that it might be more simple, less Gothically efflorescent.” “Young men say it is the only History they have ever read. The middle-aged and old shake their heads and cannot make anything of it.”

What Carlyle has done in his history is not merely to reconstruct the past; he has made a past age live again.

¹ Froude: *Thomas Carlyle, Life in London*, I, 84.

² Froude: *Thomas Carlyle, Life in London*, I, 93.

³ Reprinted in Thackeray's *Sultan Stork*, etc., 1887.

⁴ The italics are not Thackeray's.

⁵ Letters of Sept. 18, 1837, and Feb. 9, 1838.

We live through the French Revolution with him; we are present in the terrible death-chamber of Louis XV; we stand at a window with Carlyle, watching the procession of the notables, and he tells us something not only of the past but of the future of each man; we are in the mob surging about the Bastille, and we hear Carlyle shout: "On, then, all Frenchmen, that have hearts in your bodies! Roar with all your throats, ye Sons of Liberty! Smite, thou Louis Tournay, Cartwright of the Marais; smite at that outer drawbridge chain, though the fiery hail whistle round thee." The brewer Santerre, standing close by, "advises that the place be fired by a mixture of phosphorus and oil of turpentine." The suggestion is somewhat impracticable, and Carlyle turns suddenly upon the theorizing brewer with the question: "O Spinola Santerre, hast thou the mixture ready?" As the drama proceeds, we find ourselves forced to flee from Paris with King Louis. The King is phlegmatic and undisturbed: we are in shuddering suspense. We accompany the King through his later, sad, royal processions; with the Valet Cléry we stand outside the glass-doors and watch the tragic parting of Louis and his family. And we live through all the agonies of The Terror.

This is not then a staid and sober, scientific record of historic fact. It is a great prose-poem displaying creative art rather than critical scholarship. It is sometimes inaccurate in detail — less often however than is popularly supposed — it often bewilders the matter-of-fact, unimaginative reader who insists upon having facts marshalled before him in orderly sequence. "It has been to me an inexhaustible joy for twenty or thirty years back," says Saintsbury,¹ "to read the excellent persons who, in English, in French, and in German, have undertaken to 'correct' Carlyle. They have demonstrated in the most sufficient and triumphant way that he sometimes represents a thing as having happened at two o'clock on Thursday when it actually happened on Tuesday at three. . . . But have they altered or destroyed one feature in the Carlylean picture?

¹ *Corrected Impressions*, p. 54.

. . . Not they! . . . The French Revolution of Carlyle is the French Revolution as it happened, as it was. The French Revolution of others is the French Revolution dug up in lifeless fragments by excellent persons with the newest patent pickaxes." "It has been said," writes John Burroughs,¹ "that Carlyle has been superseded by more scientific historians. When the scientific artist supersedes Michaelangelo and the scientific poet supersedes Shakespeare, then probably the scientific historian will supersede Carlyle." Saintsbury and Burroughs merely echo what Carlyle himself said of his own Book after he had written three chapters of it ²: "I feel that the work will be strange, that it either must be so or be another of the thousand and one 'Histories' which are so many dead thistles for Pedant-chaffinches to peck and fill their crops with." "Since Carlyle wrote French History," says Emerson,³ "we see that no history that we have is safe."

PAST AND PRESENT

Past and Present was written in seven weeks during the early part of the year 1843. It was written more rapidly than any of Carlyle's other books, and without the torments of mind and soul which ordinarily accompanied the composition of his books. The style shows no signs of haste: it is rather more clear and quiet than usual.

Studies for *The Life of Cromwell* had been absorbing Carlyle's attention for several months when the idea of this new book flashed into his mind. The year 1842 had been one of terrible suffering and unrest among the labouring classes. Many men felt that England was on the verge of a social upheaval which would rival the French Revolution. Carlyle felt not only this danger but also a profound pity for the suffering multitudes, and terrible scorn for the "game-preserving" gentry. In August, 1842, he had written to

¹ *Indoor Studies*, p. 138.

² To Dr. Carlyle, Oct. 28, 1834.

³ *Literary Ethics*, p. 170.

Emerson: "One of my grand difficulties is that I cannot write two books at once; cannot be in the 17th century and the 19th at one and the same moment. For my heart is sick and sore in behalf of my own poor generation; nay, I feel withal as if the one hope of help for it consisted in the possibility of new Puritans and new Cromwells: thus do the two centuries stand related to me, the 17th *worthless* except precisely in so far as it can be made the 19th." And during the composition of the book he wrote to Sterling (Feb. 23, 1843): "The thing I am on is a volume called *Past and Present*: it is moral, political, historical, etc. — a most questionable, red-hot, indignant thing: for my heart is sick to look at the things now going on in England; and two million of men sitting in Poor-Law Bastilles seem to ask of every English soul, 'Hast thou no word to say for us?' On the whole I am sorry for myself, — sorry that I could not help writing such words, and had none better to write." And when the Book was finished he said of it to Emerson (Mar. 11, 1843), "I know not whether it is preliminary to *Oliver* or not; but it had gradually come to be the preliminary of anything possible for me."

In *Past and Present* Carlyle sets side by side pictures of twelfth century and nineteenth century social conditions in England. No comparisons are made: the reader is allowed to draw his own conclusions, to speculate concerning the "progress of civilization," and to consider the value of the science of political economy in 1842. Books I, III, and IV describe present conditions and suggest remedies; Book II, written in Carlyle's most vivid historical style, describes the life in a twelfth century monastery as recorded in the chronicle of Joceline de Brakelond, a monk at St. Edmundsbury. Artistically Book II of *Past and Present* is one of Carlyle's greatest achievements. It has not been possible to include it *in toto* in this volume and it is not a work from which selections can be made satisfactorily. The selections from Books I, III, and IV, far inferior in literary value, are included for the revelation they give of Carlyle's social teachings.

The crisis of 1842-3 passed; there was no social revolution in England; and Carlyle's gloomy prognostications afforded his opponents much material for satirical mirth. Mr. Froude has suggested, however, that the crisis was averted by the adoption of some of the very remedies prescribed by Carlyle.¹ The corn laws were repealed; factory acts, education acts, land acts, etc., took the place of the *laissez-faire* policy of the Government, the policy of non-interference in industrial matters and trade.

But Carlyle had little faith in the permanent value of any specific acts of Parliament. His chief aim in all his writings was to arouse the public conscience, to make men think; *Past and Present* succeeded in making men think, and it is because of that fact rather than because it demanded the repeal of the corn laws that it helped to save England in 1843. Carlyle taught that as society is composed of individuals, it can be reformed only by the reform of individuals, that it is each man's business first to attend to his own reformation, to make one less "quack" in the world, to become a "faithful, discerning soul"; then, and not until then, will he be able to know what he must do. His remedy is simple, so simple that many of his critics have accused him of offering no remedy, of substituting a protest for a program. But would not the world be better off if its "acts of Parliament" had all been the result of the "heroic visions" of "faithful, discerning souls," and if our statute-books could be purged of the legislation enacted at the suggestion of well-meaning quacks?

¹ *Thomas Carlyle, Life in London*, I, 287.

SARTOR RESARTUS

I. 3. *Reminiscences*

. . . The man Teufelsdröckh¹ passed and repassed, in his little circle, as one of those originals and nondescripts, more frequent in German Universities than elsewhere; of whom, though you see them alive, and feel certain enough that they must have a History, no History seems to be discoverable; or only such as men give of mountain rocks and antediluvian ruins: That they have been created by unknown agencies, are in a state of gradual decay, and for the present reflect light and resist pressure; that is, are visible and tangible objects in this phantasm world, where so much other mystery is.

It was to be remarked that though, by title and diploma, *Professor der Allerley-Wissenschaft*, or as we should say in English, "Professor of Things in General," he had never delivered any Course; perhaps never been incited thereto by any public furtherance or requisition. To all appearance, the enlightened Government of Weissnichtwo, in founding their New University, imagined they had done enough, if "in times like ours," as the half-official Program expressed it, "when all things are, rapidly or slowly, resolving themselves into Chaos, a Professorship of this kind had been established; whereby, as occasion called, the task of bodying somewhat forth again from such Chaos might be, even slightly, facilitated." That actual Lectures should be held, and Public Classes for the "Science of Things in General," they doubtless considered premature; on which ground too

¹ See Introduction, p. x, for explanation of proper names.

they had only established the Professorship, nowise endowed it; so that Teufelsdröckh, "recommended by the highest Names," had been promoted thereby to a Name merely.

Great, among the more enlightened classes, was the admiration of this new Professorship: how an enlightened Government had seen into the Want of the Age (*Zeitbedürfniss*); how at length, instead of Denial and Destruction, we were to have a science of Affirmation and Reconstruction; and Germany and Weissnichtwo were where they should be, in the vanguard of the world. Considerable also was the wonder at the new Professor, dropt opportunely enough into the nascent University; so able to lecture, should occasion call; so ready to hold his peace for indefinite periods, should an enlightened Government consider that occasion did not call. But such admiration and such wonder, being followed by no act to keep them living, could last only nine days; and, long before our visit to that scene, had quite died away. The more cunning heads thought it was all an expiring clutch at popularity, on the part of a Minister, whom domestic embarrassments, court intrigues, old age, and dropsy soon afterwards finally drove from the helm.

As for Teufelsdröckh, except by his nightly appearances at the *Grüne Gans*, Weissnichtwo saw little of him, felt little of him. Here, over his tumbler of Gukguk, he sat reading Journals; sometimes contemplatively looking into the clouds of his tobacco-pipe, without other visible employment: always, from his mild ways, an agreeable phenomenon there; more especially when he opened his lips for speech; on which occasions the whole Coffee-house would hush itself into silence, as if sure to hear something noteworthy. Nay, perhaps to hear a whole series and river of the most memorable utterances; such as, when once thawed, he would for hours indulge in, with fit audience: and the more memorable, as issuing from a head apparently not more interested in them, not more conscious of them, than is the sculptured stone head of some public fountain, which through its brass mouth-tube emits water to the worthy and the unworthy; careless whether it be for cooking victuals or quenching

conflagrations; indeed, maintains the same earnest assiduous look, whether any water be flowing or not.

To the Editor of these sheets, as to a young enthusiastic Englishman, however unworthy, Teufelsdröckh opened himself perhaps more than to the most. Pity only that we could not then half guess his importance, and scrutinise him with due power of vision! We enjoyed, what not three men in Weissnichtwo could boast of, a certain degree of access to the Professor's private domicile. It was the attic floor of the highest house in the Wahngasse; and might truly be called the pinnacle of Weissnichtwo, for it rose sheer up above the contiguous roofs, themselves rising from elevated ground. Moreover, with its windows it looked towards all the four *Orte*, or as the Scotch say, and we ought to say, *Airts*: the sitting-room itself commanded three; another came to view in the *Schlafgemach* (bed-room) at the opposite end; to say nothing of the kitchen, which offered two, as it were, *duplicates*, and showing nothing new. So that it was in fact the speculum or watch-tower of Teufelsdröckh; wherefrom, sitting at ease, he might see the whole life-circulation of that considerable City; the streets and lanes of which, with all their doing and driving (*Thun und Treiben*), were for the most part visible there.

"I look down into all that wasp-nest or bee-hive," have we heard him say, "and witness their wax-laying and honey-making, and poison-brewing, and choking by sulphur. From the Palace esplanade, where music plays while Serene Highness is pleased to eat his victuals, down to the low lane, where in her door-sill the aged widow, knitting for a thin livelihood, sits to feel the afternoon sun, I see it all; for, except the Schlosskirche weathercock, no biped stands so high. Couriers arrive bestrapped and bebooted, bearing Joy and Sorrow bagged-up in pouches of leather: there, topladen, and with four swift horses, rolls-in the country Baron and his household; here, on timber-leg, the lamed Soldier hops painfully along, begging alms: a thousand carriages, and wains, and cars, come tumbling-in with Food, with young Rusticity, and other Raw Produce, inanimate

or animate, and go tumbling out again with Produce manufactured. That living flood, pouring through these streets, of all qualities and ages, knowest thou whence it is coming, whither it is going? *Aus der Ewigkeit, zu der Ewigkeit hin:* From Eternity, onwards to Eternity! These are Apparitions: what else? ¹ Are they not souls rendered visible: in Bodies, that took shape and will lose it, melting into air? ² Their solid Pavement is a Picture of the Sense; ³ they walk on the bosom of Nothing, blank Time is behind them and before them. Or fanciest thou, the red and yellow Clothes-screen yonder, with spurs on its heels and feather in its crown, is but of To-day, without a Yesterday or a Tomorrow; and had not rather its Ancestor alive when Hengst and Horsa ⁴ overran thy Island? Friend, thou seest here a living link in that Tissue of History, ⁵ which inweaves all Being: watch well, or it will be past thee, and seen no more."

"*Ach, mein Lieber!*" said he once, at midnight, when we had returned from the Coffee-house in rather earnest talk, "it is a true sublimity to dwell here. These fringes of lamplight, struggling up through smoke and thousandfold exhalation—"

¹ This idea is more fully developed in the chapter on Natural Supernaturalism; see pp. 51, 52.

² Cf. Carlyle's favorite quotation from Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, iv, 1, 148 ff.:

"These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air;
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."

³ Man's whole knowledge of the material world comes through his senses. Of the real nature of the most "solid pavement" he knows nothing: he merely knows the "picture" that his senses form. See Appendix A.

⁴ Hengst and Horsa. Jutish chiefs, brothers, who invaded England in 449, and founded the Kingdom of Kent.

⁵ Compare Carlyle's interpretation of the Norse Myth of Igdrasil. (*Heroes*, ed. Adams, p. 28.)

tion, some fathoms into the ancient reign of Night, what thinks *Boötes*¹ of them, as he leads his Hunting-Dogs over the Zenith in their leash of sidereal fire? That stifled hum of Midnight, when Traffic has lain down to rest; and the chariot-wheels of Vanity, still rolling here and there through distant streets, are bearing her to Halls roofed-in, and lighted to the due pitch for her; and only Vice and Misery, to prowl or to moan like nightbirds, are abroad: that hum, I say, like the stertorous, unquiet slumber of sick Life, is heard in Heaven! Oh, under that hideous coverlet of vapours, and putrefactions, and unimaginable gases, what a Fermenting-vat lies simmering and hid! The joyful and the sorrowful are there; men are dying there, men are being born; men are praying, — on the other side of a brick partition, men are cursing; and around them all is the vast, void Night. The proud Grandee still lingers in his perfumed saloons, or reposes within damask curtains; Wretchedness cowers into truckle-beds, or shivers hunger-stricken into its lair of straw: in obscure cellars, *Rouge-et-Noir*² languidly emits its voice-of-destiny to haggard hungry Villains; while Councillors of State sit plotting, and playing their high chess-game, whereof the pawns are Men. The Lover whispers his mistress that the coach is ready; and she, full of hope and fear, glides down, to fly with him over the borders: the Thief, still more silently, sets-to his pick-locks and crowbars, or lurks in wait till the watchmen first snore in their boxes. Gay mansions, with supper-rooms and dancing-rooms, are full of light and music and high-swelling hearts; but, in the Condemned Cells, the pulse of life beats tremulous and faint, and bloodshot eyes look out through the darkness, which is around and within, for the light of a stern last morning. Six men are to be hanged on the morrow: comes no hammering from the *Rabenstein*? — their gallows must even now be o' building. Upwards of

¹ *Boötes*, the ox-driver. Name of the northern constellation, situated behind the constellation of the Hounds; supposed to represent a man holding a crook.

² *Rouge-et-noir*, a popular gambling game.

five-hundred-thousand two-legged animals without feathers lie round us, in horizontal positions¹; their heads all in nightcaps, and full of the foolishhest dreams. Riot cries aloud, and staggers and swaggers in his rank dens of shame; and the Mother, with streaming hair, kneels over her pallid dying infant, whose cracked lips only her tears now moisten. — All these heaped and huddled together, with nothing but a little carpentry and masonry between them; — crammed in, like salted fish in their barrel; — or weltering, shall I say, like an Egyptian pitcher of tamed vipers, each struggling to get its head above the others: *such* work goes on under that smoke-counterpane! — But I, *mein Werther*,² sit above it all; I am alone with the Stars.”. . .

I. 4. *Characteristics*

Of good society Teufelsdröckh appears to have seen little, or has mostly forgotten what he saw. He speaks out with a strange plainness; calls many things by their mere dictionary names. To him the Upholsterer is no Pontiff, neither is any Drawing-room a Temple, were it never so begilt and overhung: “a whole immensity of Brussels carpets, and pier-glasses, and ormolu,” as he himself expresses it, “cannot hide from me that such Drawing-room is simply a section of Infinite Space, where so many God-created Souls do for the time meet together.” To Teufelsdröckh the highest Duchess is respectable, is venerable; but nowise for her pearl bracelets and Malines laces: in his eyes, the star of a Lord is little less and little more than the broad button of Birmingham spelter in a Clown’s smock; “each is an implement,” he says, “in its kind; a tag for *hooking-together*; and, for the rest, was dug from the earth, and hammered on a stithy before smith’s fingers.”

¹ The picture of a city-full of horizontal sleepers is one of Carlyle’s favorite grotesque fancies. Cf. in *Fr. Rev.*, p. 153: “Mortals on each hand of you, close by, stretched out horizontal, dormant.”

² *Werther*. The name of the young and sentimental hero of Goethe’s *Sorrows of Werther*. Of this book Carlyle writes:

“That nameless unrest, the blind struggle of a soul in bondage, that high, sad, longing discontent, which was agitating every bosom, had driven Goethe almost to despair. All felt it; he alone could give it voice.” (*Miscellanies*, I.)

Thus does the Professor look in men's faces with a strange impartiality, a strange scientific freedom; like a man unversed in the higher circles, like a man dropped thither from the Moon. Rightly considered, it is in this peculiarity, running through his whole system of thought, that all these short-comings, over-shootings, and multiform perversities, take rise: if indeed they have not a second source, also natural enough, in his Transcendental Philosophies, and humour of looking at all Matter and Material things as Spirit; whereby truly his case were but the more hopeless, the more lamentable.

I. 8. *The World Out of Clothes*

"With men of a speculative turn," writes Teufelsdröckh, "there come seasons, meditative, sweet, yet awful hours, when in wonder and fear you ask yourself that unanswerable question: Who am *I*; the thing that can say '*I*' (*das Wesen das sich ICH nennt*)? The world, with its loud trafficking, retires into the distance; and, through the paper-hangings, and stone-walls, and thick-plied tissues of Commerce and Polity, and all the living and lifeless integuments (of Society and a Body), wherewith your Existence sits surrounded, — the sight reaches forth into the void Deep, and you are alone with the Universe, and silently commune with it, as one mysterious Presence with another.

"Who am *I*; what is this *ME*? A Voice, a Motion, an Appearance; — some embodied, visualised Idea in the Eternal Mind? *Cogito, ergo sum*.¹ Alas, poor Cogitator, this takes us but a little way. Sure enough, *I* am; and lately was not: but Whence? How? Whereto? The answer lies around, written in all colours and motions, uttered in all tones of jubilee and wail, in thousand-figured, thousand-voiced, harmonious Nature: but where is the cunning eye and ear to whom that God-written Apocalypse²

¹ *Cogito, ergo sum*. I think, therefore I exist. The proof of man's existence offered by Descartes, the French philosopher (1596-1650).

² Apocalypse. The revelation granted to St. John in the Island of Patmos; and so, by extension of meaning, any revelation.

will yield articulate meaning? We sit as in a boundless Phantasmagoria and Dream-grotto¹; boundless, for the faintest star, the remotest century, lies not even nearer the verge thereof: sounds and many-coloured visions flit round our sense; but Him, the Unslumbering, whose work both Dream and Dreamer are, we see not; except in rare half-waking moments, suspect not. Creation, says one, lies before us, like a glorious Rainbow; but the Sun that made it lies behind us, hidden from us. Then, in that strange Dream, how we clutch at shadows as if they were substances; and sleep deepest while fancying ourselves most awake! Which of your Philosophical Systems is other than a dream-theorem; a net quotient, confidently given out, where divisor and dividend are both unknown? What are all your national Wars, with their Moscow Retreats, and sanguinary hate-filled Revolutions, but the Somnambulism of uneasy Sleepers? This Dreaming, this Somnambulism is what we on Earth call Life; wherein the most indeed undoubtedly wander, as if they knew right hand from left; yet they only are wise who know that they know nothing.

“Pity that all Metaphysics had hitherto proved so inexpressibly unproductive! The secret of Man’s Being is still like the Sphinx’s secret: a riddle that he cannot rede; and for ignorance of which he suffers death, the worst death, a spiritual. What are your Axioms, and Categories, and Systems, and Aphorisms? Words, words. High Air-castles are cunningly built of Words, the Words well bedded also in good Logic-mortar; wherein, however, no Knowledge will come to lodge. *The whole is greater than the part*: how exceedingly true! *Nature abhors a vacuum*: how exceedingly false and calumnious! Again, *Nothing can act but where it is*: with all my heart; only, WHERE is it? Be not the slave of Words: is not the Distant, the Dead, while I love it, and long for it, and mourn for it, Here, in the genuine sense, as truly as the floor I stand on? But that same WHERE,

¹ Phantasmagoria and Dream-Grotto. A phantasmagoria is a shifting succession of images as seen in a dream. Dream-grotto is one of Carlyle’s favorite terms for this world.

with its brother WHEN,¹ are from the first the master-colours of our Dream-grotto; say rather, the Canvas (the warp and woof thereof) whereon all our Dreams and Life-visions are painted. Nevertheless, has not a deeper meditation taught certain of every climate and age, that the WHERE and WHEN, so mysteriously inseparable from all our thoughts, are but superficial terrestrial adhesions to thought; that the Seer may discern them where they mount up out of the celestial EVERYWHERE and FOREVER: have not all nations conceived their God as Omni-present and Eternal; as existing in a universal HERE, and everlasting NOW? Think well, thou too wilt find that Space is but a mode of our human Sense, so likewise Time; there *is* no Space and no Time: WE are — we know not what; — light-sparkles floating in the æther of Deity!

“So that this so solid-seeming World, after all, were but an air-image, our ME the only reality: and Nature, with its thousandfold production and destruction, but the reflex of our own inward Force, (the phantasy of our Dream); or what the Earth-Spirit in *Faust* names it, *the living visible Garment of God*. . . .

“It was in some such mood, when wearied and fordome with these high speculations, that I first came upon the question of Clothes. Strange enough, it strikes me, is this same fact of there being Tailors and Tailored. The Horse I ride has his own whole fell: strip him of the girths and flaps and extraneous tags I have fastened round him, and the noble creature is his own sempster and weaver and spinner; nay his own bootmaker, jeweller, and man-milliner; he bounds free through the valleys, with a perennial rainproof court-suit on his body; wherein warmth and easiness of fit have reached perfection; nay, the graces also have been considered, and frills and fringes, with gay variety of colour, featly appended, and ever in the right place, are not wanting. While I — good Heaven! — have thatched myself over with the dead fleeces of sheep, the bark of vege-

¹ The mysteries called Time and Space are considered more at length in the chapter on Natural Supernaturalism, pp. 47-51.

tables, the entrails of worms, the hides of oxen or seals, the felt of furred beasts; and walk abroad a moving Rag-screen, overheaped with shreds and tatters raked from the Charnel-house of Nature, where they would have rotted, to rot on me more slowly! Day after day, I must thatch myself anew; day after day, this despicable thatch must lose some film of its thickness; some film of it, frayed away by tear and wear, must be brushed-off into the Ashpit, into the Lay stall; till by degrees the whole has been brushed thither, and I, the dust-making, patent Rag-grinder, get new material to grind down. O subter-brutish! vile! most vile! For have not I too a compact all-enclosing Skin, whiter or dingier? Am I a botched mass of tailors' and cobblers' shreds, then; or a tightly-articulated, homogeneous little Figure, automatic, nay alive? . . .

I. 9. *Adamitism*

. . . "Often in my atrabiliar moods, when I read of pompous ceremonials, Frankfort Coronations, Royal Drawing-rooms, Levees, Couchees; and how the ushers and macers and pursuivants are all in waiting; how Duke this is presented by Archduke that, and Colonel A by General B, and innumerable Bishops, Admirals, and miscellaneous Functionaries, are advancing gallantly to the Anointed Presence; and I strive, in my remote privacy, to form a clear picture of that solemnity, — on a sudden, as by some enchanter's wand, — the — shall I speak it? — the Clothes fly-off the whole dramatic corps; and Dukes, Grandees, Bishops, Generals, Anointed Presence itself, every mother's son of them, stand straddling there, not a shirt on them; and I know not whether to laugh or weep. This physical and psychical infirmity, in which perhaps I am not singular, I have, after hesitation, thought right to publish, for the solace of those afflicted with the like."

Would to Heaven, say we, thou hadst thought right to keep it secret! Who is there now that can read the five columns of Presentations in his Morning Newspaper without a shudder? Hypochondriac men, and all men are to a

certain extent hypochondriac, should be more gently treated. With what readiness our fancy, in this shattered state of the nerves, follows out the consequences which Teufelsdröckh, with a devilish coolness, goes on to draw:

“What would Majesty do, could such an accident befall in reality; should the buttons all simultaneously start, and the solid wool evaporate, in very Deed, as here in Dream? *Ach Gott!* How each skulks into the nearest hiding-place; their high State Tragedy (*Haupt- und Staats-Action*) becomes a *Pickleherring-Farce*¹ to weep at, which is the worst kind of Farce; *the tables* (according to Horace),² and with them, the whole fabric of Government, Legislation, Property, Police, and Civilised Society, *are dissolved*, in wails and howls.”

Lives the man that can figure a naked Duke of Windlestraw addressing a naked House of Lords? Imagination, choked as in mephitic air, recoils on itself, and will not forward with the picture. The Woolsack,³ the Ministerial, the Opposition Benches — *infandum! infandum!* And yet why is the thing impossible? Was not every soul, or rather every body, of these Guardians of our Liberties, naked, or nearly so, last night; “a forked Radish with a head fantastically carved?” And why might he not, did our stern fate so order it, walk out to St. Stephen’s,⁴ as well as into bed, in that no-fashion; and there, with other similar Radishes, hold a Bed of Justice?⁵ “Solace of those afflicted with the like!” Unhappy Teufelsdröckh, had man ever such a “physical or psychical infirmity” before? And now how

¹ Pickleherring. The name of a buffoon in an old English farce became the stock name of the hero of the *Pickelhäring-spiele* in Germany in the 17th century. Carlyle is fond of this term. See *Fr. Rev.*, p. 174.

² *Satires*, II. 1. 86. *Solventur tabulæ* — the indictment will be quashed.

³ Woolsack. The cushion on which the Lord Chancellor sits in the House of Lords.

⁴ St. Stephen’s Hall, Westminster. The meeting place of the House of Commons before the erection of the present Houses of Parliament in 1840.

⁵ Bed of Justice. Term “applied to the throne which the King of France occupied when presiding over Parliament, which, by old usage, was canopied somewhat like a bed.” Note in Rose’s Edition of Carlyle’s *French Revolution*, vol. 1, p. 97.

many, perhaps, may thy unparalleled confession (which we, even to the sounder British world, and goaded-on by Critical and Biographical duty, grudge to reimpart) incurably infect therewith! Art thou the malignest of Sansculottists¹ or only the maddest?

I. 10. *Pure Reason*

. . . "To the eye of vulgar Logic," says he, "what is man? An omnivorous Biped that wears Breeches. To the eye of Pure Reason what is he? A Soul, a Spirit, and divine Apparition. Round his mysterious ME, there lies, under all those wool-rags, a Garment of Flesh (or of Senses), textured in the Loom of Heaven; whereby he is revealed to his like, and dwells with them in UNION and DIVISION; and sees and fashions for himself a Universe, with azure Starry Spaces, and long Thousands of Years. Deep-hidden is he under that strange Garment; amid Sounds and Colours and Forms, as it were, swathed-in, and inextricably over-shrouded: yet it is sky-woven, and worthy of a God. Stands he not thereby in the centre of Immensities, in the conflux of Eternities? He feels; power has been given him to know, to believe; nay does not the spirit of Love, free in its celestial primeval brightness, even here, though but for moments, look through? Well said Saint Chrysostom,² with his lips of gold, 'the true SHEKINAH³ is Man:' where else is the GOD'S-PRESENCE manifested not to our eyes only, but to our hearts, as in our fellow-man?" . . .

¹ Sansculottist. The term *sansculotte* (literally, *without knee-breeches*) was applied during the French Revolution to the lower classes of Paris, who, unlike the gentry, wore long pantaloons. Thence it came to denote a revolutionary reformer. In his "Clothes Philosophy" in *Sartor*, and frequently in *The French Revolution*, Carlyle uses the term *sansculottism* as a synonym of *descendentalism*, the stripping off of all adventitious "wrappages" in the search for "naked Truth." See Introduction, p. xii.

² St. Chrysostom. A fourth century Father of the Greek Church.

³ Shekinah. The Jewish name for the Symbol of the Divine Presence which rested over the Mercy Seat in the form of a light or a cloud. (Cf. *Heroes*, ed. Adams, p. 13.)

II. 3. *Pedagogy*

... Among the earliest tools of any complicity which a man, especially a man of letters, gets to handle, are his Class-books. On this portion of his History, Teufelsdröckh looks down professedly as indifferent. Reading he "cannot remember ever to have learned;" so perhaps had it by nature. He says generally: "Of the insignificant portion of my Education, which depended on Schools, there need almost no notice be taken. I learned what others learn; and kept it stored-by in a corner of my head, seeing as yet no manner of use in it. My Schoolmaster, a downbent, brokenhearted, underfoot martyr, as others of that guild are, did little for me, except discover that he could do little: he, good soul, pronounced me a genius, fit for the learned professions; and that I must be sent to the Gymnasium, and one day to the University. Meanwhile, what printed thing soever I could meet with I read. My very copper pocket-money I laid-out on stall-literature; which, as it accumulated, I with my own hands sewed into volumes. By this means was the young head furnished with a considerable miscellany of things and shadows of things: History in authentic fragments lay mingled with Fabulous chimeras, wherein also was reality; and the whole not as dead stuff, but as living pabulum, tolerably nutritive for a mind as yet so peptic."

That the Entepfuhl¹ Schoolmaster judged well, we now know. Indeed, already in the youthful Gneschen,² with all his outward stillness, there may have been manifest an inward vivacity that promised much; symptoms of a spirit singularly open, thoughtful, almost poetical. Thus, to say nothing on his Suppers on the Orchard-wall, and other phenomena of that earlier period, have many readers of these pages stumbled, in their twelfth year, on such reflections as the following? "It struck me much, as I sat by the Kuh-

¹ Entepfuhl, or the Duck Pond, the native village of Teufelsdröckh, is the "mythical" representative of Ecclefechan, where Carlyle was born. Near the Carlyle cottage was a large duck pond.

² Gneschen, diminutive of Diogenes, the Christian name of Herr Teufelsdröckh.

bach, one silent noontide, and watched it flowing, gurgling, to think how this same streamlet had flowed and gurgled, through all changes of weather and of fortune, from beyond the earliest date of History. Yes, probably on the morning when Joshua forded Jordan; even as at the mid-day when Cæsar, doubtless with difficulty, swam the Nile, yet kept his *Commentaries* dry, — this little Kuhbach, assiduous as Tiber, Eurotas or Siloa, was murmuring on across the wilderness, as yet unnamed, unseen: here, too, as in the Euphrates and the Ganges, is a vein or veinlet of the grand World-circulation of Waters, which, with its atmospheric arteries, has lasted and lasts simply with the world. Thou fool! Nature alone is antique, and the oldest art a mushroom; that idle crag thou sittest on is six-thousand years of age." In which little thought, as in a little fountain, may there not lie the beginning of those well-nigh unutterable meditations on the grandeur and mystery of TIME, and its relation to ETERNITY, which play such a part in this Philosophy of Clothes?

Over his Gymnastic and Academic years the Professor by no means lingers so lyrical and joyful as over his childhood. Green sunny tracts there are still; but intersected by bitter rivulets of tears, here and there stagnating into sour marshes of discontent. "With my first view of the Hinterschlag Gymnasium,"¹ writes he, "my evil days began. Well do I still remember the red sunny Whitsuntide morning, when, trotting full of hope by the side of Father Andreas, I entered the main street of the place, and saw its steeple-clock (then striking Eight) and *Schuldthurm* (Jail), and the aproned or disaproned Burghers moving-in to breakfast: a little dog, in mad terror, was rushing past; for some human imps had tied a tin-kettle to its tail; thus did the agonised creature, loud-jingling, career through the whole length of the Borough, and become notable enough. Fit emblem of many a Conquering Hero, to whom Fate (wed-

¹ Hinterschlag (Kick-behind) Academy represents "mythically" Annan Academy, which Carlyle entered at Whitsuntide, 1805, when he was in his tenth year.

ding Fantasy to Sense, as it often elsewhere does) has malignantly appended a tin-kettle of Ambition, to chase him on; which the faster he runs, urges him the faster, the more loudly and more foolishly! Fit emblem also of much that awaited myself, in that mischievous Den; as in the World, whereof it was a portion and epitome!

"Alas, the kind beech-rows of Entepfuhl were hidden in the distance: I was among strangers, harshly, at best indifferently, disposed towards me; the young heart felt, for the first time, quite orphaned and alone." His schoolfellows, as is usual, persecuted him: "They were Boys," he says, "mostly rude Boys, and obeyed the impulse of rude Nature, which bids the deer-herd fall upon any stricken hart, the duck-flock put to death any broken-winged brother or sister, and on all hands the strong tyrannise over the weak." He admits, that though "perhaps in an unusual degree morally courageous," he succeeded ill in battle, and would fain have avoided it; a result, as would appear, owing less to his small personal stature (for in passionate seasons he was "incredibly nimble"), than to his "virtuous principles." "If it was disgraceful to be beaten," says he, "it was only a shade less disgraceful to have so much as fought; thus was I drawn two ways at once, and in this important element of school-history, the war-element, had little but sorrow." On the whole, that same excellent "Passivity," so notable in Teufelsdröckh's childhood, is here visibly enough again getting nourishment. "He wept often; indeed to such a degree that he was nicknamed *Der Weinende* (the Tearful), which epithet, till towards his thirteenth year, was indeed not quite unmerited. Only at rare intervals did the young soul burst-forth into fire-eyed rage, and, with a stormfulness (*Ungestüm*) under which the boldest quailed, assert that he too had Rights of Man, or at least of Mankin." In all which, who does not discern a fine flower-tree and cinnamon-tree (of genius) nigh choked among pumpkins, reed-grass and ignoble shrubs; and forced if it would live, to struggle upwards only, and not outwards; into a *height* quite sickly, and disproportioned to its *breadth*?

We find, moreover, that his Greek and Latin¹ were "mechanically" taught; Hebrew scarce even mechanically; much else which they called History, Cosmography, Philosophy, and so forth, no better than not at all. So that, except inasmuch as Nature was still busy; and he himself "went about, as was of old his wont, among the Craftsmen's workshops, there learning many things;" and farther lighted on some small store of curious reading, in Hans Wachtel the Cooper's house, where he lodged, — his time, it would appear, was utterly wasted. Which facts the Professor has not yet learned to look upon with any contentment. Indeed, throughout the whole of this Bag *Scorpio*,² where we now are, and often in the following Bag, he shows himself unusually animated on the matter of Education, and not without some touch of what we might presume to be anger.

"My Teachers," says he, "were hide-bound Pedants, without knowledge of man's nature, or of boy's; or of aught save their lexicons and quarterly account-books. Innumerable dead Vocables (no dead Language, for they themselves knew no Language) they crammed into us, and called it fostering the growth of mind. How can an inanimate, mechanical Gerund-grinder, the like of whom will, in a subsequent century, be manufactured at Nürnberg out of wood and leather, foster the growth of anything; much more of Mind, which grows, not like a vegetable (by having its roots littered with etymological compost), but like a spirit, by mysterious contact of Spirit; Thought kindling itself at the fire of living Thought? How shall *he* give kindling, in whose own inward man there is no live coal, but all is burnt

¹ In his *Notes and Corrections* on an article entitled *Thomas Carlyle* by Frederick Althaus, in *Unsere Zeit*, July, 1866, Carlyle himself writes on this passage: "'Greek,' for example, consisted of the *alphabet*, mainly; 'Hebrew' is quite a German entity, — nobody in that region, except my Revd. old Mr. Johnstone, could have read a word of it to save his life. I did get to read Latin and French with fluency."

² Part of the literary fiction in *Sartor* is that Herr Teufelsdröckh's observations were preserved in paper bags, each labelled with the name of one of the constellations.

out to a dead grammatical cinder? The Hinterschlag Professors knew syntax enough; and of the human soul thus much: that it had a faculty called Memory, and could be acted-on through the muscular integument, by appliance of birch-rods.

"Alas, so is it everywhere, so will it ever be; till the Hodman is discharged, or reduced to hodbearing; and an Architect is hired, and on all hands fitly encouraged: till communities and individuals discover, not without surprise, that fashioning the souls of a generation by Knowledge can rank on a level with blowing their bodies to pieces by Gunpowder; that with Generals and Fieldmarshals for killing, there should be world-honoured Dignitaries, and were it possible, true God-ordained Priests, for teaching. But as yet, though the Soldier wears openly, and even parades, his butchering-tool, nowhere, far as I have travelled, did the Schoolmaster make show of his instructing-tool: nay, were he to walk abroad with birch girt on thigh, as if he therefrom expected honour, would there not, among the idler class, perhaps a certain levity be excited?"

In the third year of this Gymnastic period,¹ Father Andreas seems to have died: the young Scholar, otherwise so maltreated, saw himself for the first time clad outwardly in sables, and inwardly in quite inexpressible melancholy. "The dark bottomless Abyss, that lies under our feet, had yawned open; the pale kingdoms of Death, with all their innumerable silent nations and generations, stood before him; the inexorable word, NEVER! now first showed its meaning.² My Mother wept, and her sorrow got vent; but in my heart there lay a whole lake of tears, pent-up in silent desolation. Nevertheless the unworn Spirit is strong; Life is so healthful that it even finds nourishment in Death: these stern experiences, planted down by Memory in my

¹ This is not even "mythically" autobiographical. Carlyle's father lived until his son was 37 years old.

² Cf. in *Fr. Rev.*, p. 196, "Thou good soul, I shall never, never through all ages of Time, see thee any more! — *Never!* O Reader, knowest thou that hard word?"

Imagination, rose there to a whole cypress-forest, sad but beautiful; waving, with not unmelodious sighs, in dark luxuriance, in the hottest sunshine, through long years of youth: — as in manhood also it does, and will do; for I have now pitched my tent under a Cypress-tree; the Tomb is now my inexpugnable Fortress, ever close by the gate of which I look upon the hostile armaments, and pains and penalties of tyrannous Life placidly enough, and listen to its loudest threatenings with a still smile. O ye loved ones, that already sleep in the noiseless Bed of Rest, whom in life I could only weep for and never help; and ye, who wide-scattered still toil lonely in the monster-bearing Desert, dyeing the flinty ground with your blood, — yet a little while, and we shall all meet THERE, and our Mother's bosom will screen us all; and Oppression's harness, and Sorrow's fire-whip, and all the Gehenna Bailiffs that patrol and inhabit ever-vexed Time, cannot thenceforth harm us any more!"

.

"The University where I was educated¹ still stands vivid enough in my remembrance, and I know its name well; which name, however, I, from tenderness to existing interests and persons, shall in nowise divulge. It is my painful duty to say that, out of England and Spain, ours was the worst of all hitherto discovered Universities.² This is indeed a time when right Education is, as nearly as may be, impossible: however, in degrees of wrongness there is no limit: nay, I can conceive a worse system than that of the Nameless itself; as poisoned victual may be worse than absolute hunger.

"It is written, When the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch: wherefore, in such circumstances, may it not sometimes be safer, if both leader and led simply — sit still? Had you, anywhere in Crim Tartary,³ walled-in a

¹ The University of Edinburgh, which Carlyle entered in the autumn of 1809, when he was still in his fourteenth year.

² For a further expression of Carlyle's attitude toward the great English Universities, see Appendix B.

³ Crim Tartary. The Crimea, which is inhabited chiefly by Tartars.

square enclosure; furnished it with a small, ill-chosen Library; and then turned loose into it eleven-hundred Christian striplings; to tumble about as they listed, from three to seven years: certain persons, under the title of Professors, being stationed at the gates, to declare aloud that it was a University, and exact considerable admission-fees, — you had, not indeed in mechanical structure, yet in spirit and result, some imperfect resemblance of our High Seminary. I say, imperfect; for if our mechanical structure was quite other, so neither was our result altogether the same: unhappily, we were not in Crim Tartary, but in a corrupt European city, full of smoke and sin; moreover, in the middle of a Public, which, without far costlier apparatus than that of the Square Enclosure, and Declaration aloud, you could not be sure of gulling. . . .

“Besides all this, we boasted ourselves a Rational University;” in the highest degree hostile to Mysticism; thus was the young vacant mind furnished with much talk about Progress of the Species, Dark Ages, Prejudice, and the like; so that all were quickly enough blown out into a state of windy argumentativeness; whereby the better sort had soon to end in sick, impotent Scepticism; the worser sort explode (*crepiren*) in finished Self-conceit, and to all spiritual intents become dead. — But this too is portion of mankind’s lot. If our era is the Era of Unbelief, why murmur under it; is there not a better coming, nay come? As in long-drawn systole and long-drawn diastole, must the period of Faith alternate with the period of Denial; must the vernal growth, the summer luxuriance of all Opinions, Spiritual Representations and Creations, be followed by, and again follow, the autumnal decay, the winter dissolution? For man lives in Time, has his whole earthly being, endeavour and destiny shaped for him by Time: only in the transitory Time-Symbol is the ever-motionless Eternity we stand on made manifest. And yet, in such winter-seasons of Denial, it is for the nobler-minded perhaps a comparative misery to have been born, and to be awake and work; and for the duller a felicity, if, like hibernating animals, safe-lodged in

some Salamanca University,¹ or Sybaris City,² or other superstitious or voluptuous Castle of Indolence, they can slumber-through, in stupid dreams, and only awaken when the loud-roaring hailstorms have all done their work, and to our prayers and martyrdoms the new Spring has been vouchsafed."

That in the environment, here mysteriously enough shadowed forth, Teufelsdröckh must have felt ill at ease, cannot be doubtful. "The hungry young," he says, "looked up to their spiritual Nurses; and, for food, were bidden eat the east-wind. What vain jargon of controversial Metaphysic, Etymology, and mechanical Manipulation falsely named Science, was current there, I indeed learned, better perhaps than the most. Among eleven-hundred Christian youths, there will not be wanting some eleven eager to learn. By collision with such, a certain warmth, a certain polish was communicated; by instinct and happy accident, I took less to rioting (*renommiren*), than to thinking and reading, which latter also I was free to do. Nay from the chaos of that Library, I succeeded in fishing-up more books perhaps than had been known to the very keepers thereof.³ The foundation of a Literary Life was hereby laid: I learned, on my own strength, to read fluently in almost all cultivated languages, on almost all subjects and sciences; farther, as man is ever the prime object to man, already it was my favourite employment to read character in speculation, and from the Writing to construe the Writer. A certain ground-plan of Human Nature and Life began to fashion itself in me; wondrous enough, now when I look back on it; for my whole Universe, physical and spiritual, was as yet a Machine! However, such a conscious, recognised ground-

¹ Salamanca University. One of the most wealthy and renowned of medieval universities.

² Sybaris City. A city of Magna Grecia, founded in the eighth century B.C., noted for its wealth and luxury (whence the epithet Sybarite).

³ Compare Carlyle's teachings concerning the function of a modern university in *Hero as Man of Letters*.

plan, the truest I had, *was* beginning to be there, and by additional experiments might be corrected and indefinitely extended."

Thus from poverty does the strong educe nobler wealth; thus in the destitution of the wild desert does our young Ishmael¹ acquire for himself the highest of all possessions, that of Self-help. Nevertheless a desert this was, waste, and howling with savage monsters. Teufelsdröckh gives us long details of his "fever-paroxysms of Doubt;" his Inquiries concerning Miracles, and the Evidences of religious Faith; and how "in the silent night watches, still darker in his heart than over sky and earth, he has cast himself before the All-seeing, and with audible prayers cried vehemently for Light, for deliverance from Death and the Grave. Not till after long years, and unspeakable agonies, did the believing heart surrender; sink into spell-bound sleep, under the nightmare, Unbelief; and, in this hag-ridden dream, mistake God's fair living world for a pallid, vacant Hades and extinct Pandemonium. But through such Purgatory pain," continues he, "it is appointed us to pass; first must the dead Letter of Religion own itself dead, and drop piecemeal into dust, if the living Spirit of Religion, freed from this its charnel-house, is to arise on us, newborn of Heaven, and with new healing under its wings."

To which Purgatory pains, seemingly severe enough, if we add a liberal measure of Earthly distresses, want of practical guidance, want of sympathy, want of money, want of hope; and all this in the fervid season of youth, so exaggerated in imagining, so boundless in desires, yet here so poor in means, — do we not see a strong incipient spirit oppressed and overloaded from without and from within; the fire of genius struggling-up among fuel-wood of the greenest, and as yet with more of bitter vapour than of clear flame?

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¹ Ishmael, the son of Abraham and the handmaid Hagar, was cast out by his father after the birth of Isaac, and was saved from death in the desert by an angel of God, who showed to Hagar a well of water. See *Genesis*, xxi.

II. 4. *Getting Under Way*

. . . "I have heard affirmed (surely in jest)," observes he elsewhere, "by not unphilanthropic persons, that it were a real increase of human happiness, could all young men from the age of nineteen be covered under barrels, or rendered otherwise invisible; and there left to follow their lawful studies and callings, till they emerged, sadder and wiser, at the age of twenty-five. With which suggestion, at least as considered in the light of a practical scheme, I need scarcely say that I nowise coincide. Nevertheless it is plausibly urged that, as young ladies (*Mädchen*) are, to mankind, precisely the most delightful in those years; so young gentlemen (*Bübchen*) do then attain their maximum of detestability. Such gawks (*Gecken*) are they, and foolish peacocks, and yet with such a vulturous hunger for self-indulgence; so obstinate, obstreperous, vain-glorious; in all senses, so froward and so forward. No mortal's endeavour or attainment will, in the smallest, content the as yet unendeavouring, unattaining young gentleman; but he could make it all infinitely better, were it worthy of him. Life everywhere is the most manageable matter, simple as a question in the Rule-of-Three: multiply your second and third term together, divide the product by the first, and your quotient will be the answer, — which you are but an ass if you cannot come at. The booby has not yet found-out, by any trial, that, do what one will, there is ever a cursed fraction, oftenest a decimal repeater, and no net integer quotient so much as to be thought of."

II. 7. *The Everlasting No*¹

UNDER the strange nebulous envelopment, wherein our Professor has now shrouded himself, no doubt but his spiritual nature is nevertheless progressive, and growing: for how can the "Son of Time," in any case, stand still? We behold him, through those dim years, in a state of

¹ The Everlasting No. Man's denial of the existence in the universe of any spiritual power, any plan, any purpose: Materialism and Atheism.

crisis, of transition: his mad Pilgrimings, and general solution into aimless Discontinuity, what is all this but a mad Fermentation; wherefrom, the fiercer it is, the clearer product will one day evolve itself?

Such transitions are ever full of pain: thus the Eagle when he moults is sickly; and, to attain his new beak, must harshly dash-off the old one upon rocks. What Stoicism soever our Wanderer, in his individual acts and motions, may affect, it is clear that there is a hot fever of anarchy and misery raging within; coruscations of which flash out: as, indeed, how could there be other? Have we not seen him disappointed, bemocked of Destiny, through long years? All that the young heart might desire and pray for has been denied; nay, as in the last worst instance, offered and then snatched away. Ever an "excellent Passivity"; but of useful, reasonable Activity, essential to the former as Food to Hunger, nothing granted: till at length, in this wild Pilgrimage, he must forcibly seize for himself an Activity, though useless, unreasonable. Alas, his cup of bitterness, which had been filling drop by drop, ever since that first "ruddy morning" in the Hinterschlag Gymnasium, was at the very lip; and then with that poison-drop, of the Towgood-and-Blumine¹ business, it runs over, and even hisses over in a deluge of foam.

He himself says once, with more justice than originality: "Man is, properly speaking, based upon Hope, he has no other possession but Hope; this world of his is emphatically the Place of Hope."² What, then, was our Professor's possession? We see him, for the present, quite shut-out from Hope; looking not into the golden orient, but vaguely all round into a dim copper firmament, pregnant with earthquake and tornado.

Alas, shut-out from Hope, in a deeper sense than we yet dream of! For, as he wanders wearisomely through this world, he has now lost all tidings of another and higher.

¹ Towgood and Blumine. Teufelsdröckh's most intimate friend and lady-love, respectively, who unfortunately had fallen in love with each other.

² See Introduction, p. viii.

Full of religion, or at least of religiosity, as our Friend has since exhibited himself, he hides not that, in those days, he was wholly irreligious: "Doubt had darkened into Unbelief," says he; "shade after shade goes grimly over your soul, till you have the fixed, starless, Tartarean black." To such readers as have reflected, what can be called reflecting, on man's life, and happily discovered, in contradiction to much Profit-and-Loss Philosophy,¹ speculative and practical, that Soul is *not* synonymous with Stomach; who understand, therefore, in our Friend's words, "that, for man's well-being, Faith is properly the one thing needful; how, with it, Martyrs, otherwise weak, can cheerfully endure the shame and the cross; and without it, Worldlings puke-up their sick existence, by suicide, in the midst of luxury:" to such it will be clear that, for a pure moral nature, the loss of his religious Belief was the loss of everything. Unhappy young man! All wounds, the crush of long-continued Destitution, the stab of false Friendship and of false Love, all wounds in thy so genial heart, would have healed again, had not its life-warmth been withdrawn. Well might he exclaim, in his wild way: "Is there no God, then; but at best an absentee God, sitting idle, ever since the first Sabbath, at the outside of his Universe, and *seeing* it go? Has the word Duty no meaning; is what we call Duty no divine Messenger and Guide, but a false earthly Fantasm, made-up of Desire and Fear, of emanations from the gallows and from Doctor Graham's Celestial-Bed?"²

¹ Profit-and-Loss Philosophy. Utilitarianism, or "the form of ethical doctrine which teaches that conduct is morally good according as it promotes the greatest good of the greatest number." Its chief exponents were Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), James Mill (1773-1836), and his son, John Stuart Mill (1806-1873). Carlyle's vigorous hatred of this philosophy finds constant expression in all his works; cf. especially *Hero as Prophet* (*Heroes*, ed. Adams, p. 104).

² *Doctor Graham* was a celebrated 18th century quack, whose "temple of health" in London contained a "celestial bed," which was supposed to give relief from sterility to those who slept upon it. A large fee was charged for the use of this bed. In this passage the celestial bed is a symbol of false promises of heavenly reward in return for value received. The meaning of the passage is, then, "Is duty not a divine

Happiness of an approving Conscience! Did not Paul of Tarsus, whom admiring men have since named Saint, feel that *he* was "the chief of sinners"; and Nero of Rome, jocund in spirit (*wohlgemuth*), spend much of his time in fiddling? Foolish Word-monger and Motive-grinder, who in thy Logic-mill hast an earthly mechanism for the God-like itself, and wouldst fain grind me out Virtue from the husks of Pleasure, — I tell thee, Nay! To the unregenerate Prometheus Vincitus¹ of a man, it is ever the bitterest aggravation of his wretchedness that he is conscious of Virtue, that he feels himself the victim not of suffering only, but of injustice. What then? Is the heroic inspiration we name Virtue but some Passion; some bubble of the blood, bubbling in the direction others *profit* by? I know not: only this I know, If what thou namest Happiness be our true aim, then are we all astray. With Stupidity and sound Digestion man may front much. But what, in these dull unimaginative days, are the terrors of conscience to the diseases of the Liver! Not on Morality, but on Cookery, let us build our stronghold: there brandishing our frying-pan, as censer, let us offer sweet incense to the Devil, and live at ease on the fat things *he* has provided for his Elect!"

Thus has the bewildered Wanderer to stand, as so many have done, shouting question after question into the Sibyl-cave of Destiny, and receive no Answer but an Echo. It is all a grim Desert, this once-fair world of his; wherein is heard only the howling of wild-beasts, or the shrieks of despairing, hate-filled men; and no Pillar of Cloud by day, and no Pillar of Fire by night,² any longer guides the Pilgrim. To such length has the spirit of Inquiry carried him.

inspiration, but a very earthly combination of the fear of Hell (the gallows) and the desire for heavenly reward (the bed); which reward, after all, probably doesn't exist?"

¹ *Prometheus Vincitus*. Prometheus, who stole fire for man from heaven, was chained to a rock by command of Zeus. He resisted all efforts to subdue his will. Cf. the tragedy *Prometheus Bound*, by Æschylus.

² "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light." *Exodus*, xiii, 13.

"But what boots it (*was thut's*)?" cries he: "it is but the common lot in this era. Not having come to spiritual majority prior to the *Siècle de Louis Quinze*,¹ and not being born purely a Loghead (*Dummkopf*), thou hadst no other outlook. The whole world is, like thee, sold to Unbelief; their old Temples of the Godhead, which for long have not been rainproof, crumble down; and men ask now: Where is the Godhead; our eyes never saw him?"

Pitiful enough were it, for all these wild utterances, to call our Diogenes wicked. Unprofitable servants as we all are, perhaps at no era of his life was he more decisively the Servant of Goodness, the Servant of God, than even now when doubting God's existence. "One circumstance I note," says he: "after all the nameless woe that Inquiry, which for me, what it is not always, was genuine Love of Truth, had wrought me, I nevertheless still loved Truth, and would bate no jot of my allegiance to her. 'Truth!' I cried, 'though the Heavens crush me for following her: no Falsehood! though a whole celestial Lubberland were the price of Apostasy.' In conduct it was the same. Had a divine Messenger from the clouds, or miraculous Hand-writing on the wall, convincingly proclaimed to me *This thou shalt do*, with what passionate readiness, as I often thought, would I have done it, had it been leaping into the infernal Fire. Thus, in spite of all Motive-grinders, and Mechanical Profit-and-Loss Philosophies, with the sick ophthalmia and hallucination they had brought on, was the Infinite nature of Duty still dimly present to me: living without God in the world, of God's light I was not utterly bereft; if my as yet sealed eyes, with their unspeakable longing, could nowhere see Him, nevertheless in my heart He was present, and His heaven-written Law still stood legible and sacred there."

Meanwhile, under all these tribulations, and temporal and spiritual destitutions, what must the Wanderer, in his silent soul, have endured! "The painfullest feeling," writes

¹ The Age of Louis XV, *i.e.*, the 18th century, an age of rationalism and scepticism.

he, "is that of your own Feebleness (*Unkraft*); ever, as the English Milton says, to be weak is the true misery.¹ And yet of your Strength there is and can be no clear feeling, save by what you have prospered in, by what you have done. Between vague wavering Capability and fixed indubitable Performance, what a difference! A certain inarticulate Self-consciousness dwells dimly in us; which only our Works can render articulate and decisively discernible. Our Works are the mirror wherein the spirit first sees its natural lineaments. Hence, too, the folly of that impossible Precept, *Know thyself*; till it be translated into this partially possible one, *Know what thou canst work at*.

"But for me, so strangely unprosperous had I been, the net-result of my Workings amounted as yet simply to — Nothing.² How then could I believe in my Strength, when there was as yet no mirror to see it in? Ever did this agitating, yet, as I now perceive, quite frivolous question, remain to me insoluble: Hast thou a certain Faculty, a certain Worth, such even as the most have not; or art thou the completest Dullard of these modern times?³ Alas, the fearful Unbelief is unbelief in yourself; and how could I believe? Had not my first, last Faith in myself, when even to me the Heavens seemed laid open, and I dared to love, been all-too cruelly belied?⁴ The speculative Mystery of

¹ *Paradise Lost*, I, 157, Satan to Beelzebub.

² This, at least, is autobiographical. The crisis in Carlyle's life, described in this chapter, occurred probably in July, 1822. He had left the University in 1814 and during the subsequent years he had, first, found it impossible, because of his religious views, to enter the ministry; then, had decided that it "were better to perish than continue schoolmastering;" and, finally, had spent the "three most miserable years" of his life studying law.

³ In June, 1822, Carlyle writes to his mother, "I am as happy as you ever saw me. . . . I have books to write and things to do in this world, which few wot of. . . . I consider that the Almighty has given me some glimmerings of superior understanding and mental gifts. . . . At some future day it shall go hard but I shall stand *above* these mean men, whom I have never yet stood *with*." Few of his letters during this period reflect the complete despair shown in this chapter.

⁴ The reference is directly to Teufelsdröckh's unhappy love affair with Blumine (see note 1, p. 23); and "mythically," perhaps, to Car-

Life grew ever more mysterious to me: neither in the practical Mystery had I made the slightest progress, but been everywhere buffeted, foiled, and contemptuously cast out. A feeble unit in the middle of a threatening Infinitude, I seemed to have nothing given me but eyes, whereby to discern my own wretchedness. Invisible yet impenetrable walls, as of Enchantment, divided me from all living: was there, in the wide world, any true bosom I could press trustfully to mine? O Heaven, No, there was none! I kept a lock upon my lips: why should I speak much with that shifting variety of so-called Friends, in whose withered, vain and too-hungry souls Friendship was but an incredible tradition? In such cases, your resource is to talk little, and that little mostly from the Newspapers. Now when I look back, it was a strange isolation I then lived in. The men and women around me, even speaking with me, were but Figures; I had, practically, forgotten that they were alive, that they were not merely automatic. In the midst of their crowded streets and assemblages, I walked solitary; and (except as it was my own heart, not another's, that I kept devouring) savage also, as the tiger in his jungle. Some comfort it would have been, could I, like a Faust,¹ have fancied myself tempted and tormented of the Devil; for a Hell, as I imagine, without Life, though only diabolic Life, were more frightful: but in our age of Down-pulling and Disbelief, the very Devil has been pulled down, you cannot so much as believe in a Devil. To me the Universe was all void of Life, of Purpose, of Volition, even of Hostility: it was one huge, dead, immeasurable Steam-engine, rolling on, in its dead indifference, to grind me limb from limb. O, the vast, gloomy, solitary Golgotha,² and Mill of Death! Why was the Living ban-

lyle's own youthful love for Margaret Gordon; but more probably, according to Alexander Carlyle, to his great love for Jane Welsh, which was at first beset with many difficulties.

¹ Faust. A medieval scholar and magician, reputed to have sold his soul to the Devil; the hero of Goethe's greatest work.

² Golgotha. "And when they were come into a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, . . . they crucified Him." *Gospel according to St. Matthew*, xxvii, 33.

ished thither companionless, conscious? Why, if there is no Devil; nay, unless the Devil is your God?"

A prey incessantly to such corrosions, might not, moreover, as the worst aggravation to them, the iron constitution even of a Teufelsdröckh threaten to fail? We conjecture that he has known sickness; and, in spite of his locomotive habits, perhaps sickness of the chronic sort. Hear this, for example: "How beautiful to die of broken-heart, on Paper! Quite another thing in practice; every window of your Feeling, even of your Intellect, as it were, begrimed and mud-bespattered, so that no pure ray can enter; a whole Drugshop in your inwards; the fordone soul drowning slowly in quagmires of Disgust!"

Putting all which external and internal miseries together, may we not find in the following sentences, quite in our Professor's still vein, significance enough? "From Suicide a certain aftershine (*Nachschein*) of Christianity withheld me: perhaps also a certain indolence of character; for, was not that a remedy I had at any time within reach? Often, however, was there a question present to me: Should some one now, at the turning of that corner, blow thee suddenly out of Space, into the other World, or other No-world, by pistol-shot, — how were it? On which ground, too, I have often, in sea-storms and sieged cities and other death-scenes, exhibited an imperturbability, which passed, falsely enough, for courage.

"So had it lasted," concludes the Wanderer, "so had it lasted, as in bitter protracted Death-agony, through long years. The heart within me, unvisited by any heavenly dewdrop, was smouldering in sulphurous, slow-consuming fire. Almost since earliest memory I had shed no tear; or once only when I, murmuring half-audibly, recited Faust's Deathsong, that wild *Selig der den er im Siegesglanze findet* (Happy whom *he* finds in Battle's splendour), and thought that of this last Friend even I was not forsaken, that Destiny itself could not doom me not to die. Having no hope, neither had I any definite fear, were it of Man or of Devil: nay, I often felt as if it might be solacing, could the Arch-Devil

himself, though in Tartarean terrors, but rise to me, that I might tell him a little of my mind. And yet, strangely enough, I lived in a continual, indefinite, pining fear; tremulous, pusillanimous, apprehensive of I knew not what: it seemed as if all things in the Heavens above and the Earth beneath would hurt me; as if the Heavens and the Earth were but boundless jaws of a devouring monster, wherein I, palpitating, waited to be devoured.

"Full of such humour, and perhaps the miserablest man in the whole French Capital or Suburbs, was I, one sultry Dog-day, after much perambulation, toiling along the dirty little *Rue Saint-Thomas de l'Enfer*,¹ among civic rubbish enough, in a close atmosphere, and over pavements hot as Nebuchadnezzar's Furnace;² whereby doubtless my spirits were little cheered; when, all at once, there rose a Thought in me, and I asked myself: 'What *art* thou afraid of? Wherefore, like a coward, dost thou forever pip and whimper, and go cowering and trembling? Despicable biped! what is the sum-total of the worst that lies before thee? Death? Well, Death; and say the pangs of Tophet too, and all that the Devil and Man may, will or can do against thee! Hast thou not a heart; canst thou not suffer whatsoever it be; and, as a child of Freedom, though outcast, trample Tophet itself under thy feet, while it consumes thee? Let it come, then; I will meet it and defy it!' And as I so thought, there rushed like a stream of fire over my whole soul; and I shook base Fear away from me forever. I was strong, of unknown strength; a spirit, almost a god. Ever from that time, the

¹ Carlyle, in his note on the Althaus article mentioned above (p. 16), writes of this passage: "(This) happened quite literally to myself on Leith Walk, during those three weeks of utter sleeplessness in which almost my one solace was that of a daily bathe on the sands between Leith and Portobello. Incident was as I went *down* (coming *up* I generally felt a little refreshed for the hour). . . . I was *solus*, wandering as in endless labyrinths, flinty, muddy, thorny, under a sky all *leaden*." The date of this incident, according to the conjecture of Alexander Carlyle, was July or early August, 1822.

² Nebuchadnezzar's furnace. The fiery furnace into which King Nebuchadnezzar cast Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, upon their refusal to worship the image which he had set up. See *Daniel*, iii.

temper of my misery was changed: not Fear or whining Sorrow was it, but Indignation and grim fire-eyed Defiance.¹

"Thus had the EVERLASTING NO (*das ewige Nein*) pealed authoritatively through all the recesses of my Being, of my ME; and then was it that my whole ME stood up, in native God-created majesty, and with emphasis recorded its Protest. Such a Protest, the most important transaction in Life, may that same Indignation and Defiance, in a psychological point of view, be fitly called. The Everlasting No had said: 'Behold, thou art fatherless, outcast, and the Universe is mine (the Devil's);' to which my whole Me now made answer: '*I am not thine, but Free, and forever hate thee!*'"

"It is from this hour that I incline to date my Spiritual New-birth, or Baphometic² Fire-baptism; perhaps I directly thereupon began to be a Man."

II. 9. *The Everlasting Yea*

"TEMPTATIONS in the Wilderness!"³ exclaims Teufelsdröckh: "Have we not all to be tried with such? Not so easily can the old Adam, lodged in us by birth, be dispossessed. Our Life is compassed round with Necessity; yet is the meaning of Life itself no other than Freedom, than Voluntary Force: thus have we a warfare; in the beginning, especially, a hard-fought battle. For the God-given mandate, *Work thou in Welldoing*, lies mysteriously written, in Promethean⁴ Prophetic Characters, in our hearts; and leaves us no rest, night or day, till it be deciphered and obeyed; till it burn forth, in our conduct, a visible, acted Gospel of Freedom. And as the clay-given mandate, *Eat thou and be filled*, at the

¹ See Appendix C.

² Baphomet, a medieval corruption of the name Mahomet, was the name given to the idol which the Knights Templar were accused of worshipping with mysterious rites.

³ The reference is, of course, to our Lord's forty days of fasting and temptation in the wilderness; cf. *Gospel according to St. Matthew*, iv.

⁴ Promethean. See note 1, p. 25. In this sentence the word means simply "fiery."

same time persuasively proclaims itself through every nerve, — must not there be a confusion, a contest, before the better Influence can become the upper?

“To me nothing seems more natural than that the Son of Man, when such God-given mandate first prophetically stirs within him, and the Clay must now be vanquished or vanquish, — should be carried of the spirit into grim Solitudes, and there fronting the Tempter do grimmest battle with him; defiantly setting him at naught, till he yield and fly. Name it as we choose: with or without visible Devil, whether in the natural Desert of rocks and sands, or in the populous moral Desert of selfishness and baseness, — to such Temptation are we all called. Unhappy if we are not! Unhappy if we are but Half-men, in whom that divine handwriting has never blazed forth, all-subduing, in true sun-splendour; but quivers dubiously amid meaner lights: or smoulders, in dull pain, in darkness, under earthly vapours! — Our Wilderness is the wide World in an Atheistic Century; our Forty Days are long years of suffering and fasting: nevertheless, to these also comes an end. Yes, to me also was given, if not Victory, yet the consciousness of Battle, and the resolve to persevere therein while life or faculty is left. To me also, entangled in the enchanted forests, demon-peopled, doleful of sight and of sound, it was given, after weariest wanderings, to work out my way into the higher sunlit slopes — of that Mountain which has no summit, or whose summit is in Heaven only!”

He says elsewhere, under a less ambitious figure; as figures are, once for all, natural to him: “Has not thy Life been that of most sufficient men (*tüchtigen Männer*) thou hast known in this generation? An outflush of foolish young Enthusiasm, like the first fallow-crop, wherein are as many weeds as valuable herbs: this all parched away, under the Droughts of practical and spiritual Unbelief, as Disappointment, in thought and act, often-repeated gave rise to Doubt, and Doubt gradually settled into Denial! If I have had a second-crop, and now see the perennial green-sward, and sit under umbrageous cedars, which defy all

Drought (and Doubt); herein too, be the Heavens praised, I am not without examples, and even exemplars." . . .

He says: "The hot Harmattan¹ wind had raged itself out; its howl went silent within me; and the long-deafened soul could now hear. I paused in my wild wanderings; and sat me down to wait, and consider; for it was as if the hour of change drew nigh. I seemed to surrender, to renounce utterly, and say: Fly, then, false shadows of Hope; I will chase you no more, I will believe you no more. And ye too, haggard spectres of Fear, I care not for you; ye too are all shadows and a lie. Let me rest here: for I am way-weary and life-weary; I will rest here, were it but to die: to die or to live is alike to me; alike insignificant." — And again: "Here, then, as I lay in that CENTRE OF INDIFFERENCE,² cast, doubtless by benignant upper Influence, into a healing sleep, the heavy dreams rolled gradually away, and I awoke to a new Heaven and a new Earth. The first preliminary moral act, Annihilation of Self (*Selbst-tödtung*), had been happily accomplished; and my mind's eyes were now unsealed, and its hands ungyved." . . .

"Beautiful it was to sit there, as in my skyey Tent, musing and meditating; on the high table-land, in front of the Mountains; over me, as roof, the azure Dome, and around me, for walls, four azure-flowing curtains, — namely, of the Four azure Winds, on whose bottom-fringes also I have seen gilding. And then to fancy the fair Castles that stood sheltered in these Mountain hollows; with their green flower-lawns, and white dames and damsels, lovely enough: or better still, the straw-roofed Cottages, wherein stood many a Mother baking bread, with her children round her: — all hidden and protectingly folded-up in the valley-folds; yet there and alive as sure as if I beheld them. Or to see,

¹ Harmattan. The name of a parching wind prevalent on the west coast of Africa.

² *Center of Indifference*. This is the title of the chapter which comes between *The Everlasting No* and *The Everlasting Yea*. In it is described the condition of Teufelsdröckh after his defiance of materialism and before the beginnings of his belief in "spiritualism."

as well as fancy, the nine Towns and Villages, that lay round my mountain seat, which, in still weather, were wont to speak to me (by their steeple-bells) with metal tongue; and, in almost all weather, proclaimed their vitality by repeated Smoke-clouds; whereon, as on a culinary horologe, I might read the hour of the day. For it was the smoke of cookery, as kind housewives at morning, midday, eventide, were boiling their husband's kettles; and ever a blue pillar rose up into the air, successively or simultaneously, from each of the nine, saying, as plainly as smoke could say: Such and such a meal is getting ready here. Not uninteresting! For you have the whole Borough, with all its love-makings and scandal-mongeries, contentions and contentments, as in miniature, and could cover it all with your hat. — If, in my wide Wayfarings, I had learned to look into the business of the World in its details, here perhaps was the place for combining it into general propositions, and deducing inferences therefrom.

“Often also could I see the black Tempest marching in anger through the Distance: round some Schreckhorn, as yet grim-blue, would the eddying vapour gather, and there tumultuously eddy, and flow down like a mad witch's hair; till, after a space, it vanished, and, in the clear sunbeam, your Schreckhorn stood smiling grim-white, for the vapour had held snow. How thou fermentest and elaboratest, in thy great fermenting-vat and laboratory of an Atmosphere, of a World, O Nature! — Or what is Nature? Ha! why do I not name thee GOD? Art not thou the ‘Living Garment of God’? O Heavens, is it, in very deed, HE, then, that ever speaks through thee; that lives and loves in thee, that lives and loves in me?

“Fore-shadows, call them rather fore-splendours, of that Truth, and Beginning of Truths, fell mysteriously over my soul. Sweeter than Dayspring to the Shipwrecked in Nova Zembla; ah, like the mother's voice to her little child that strays bewildered, weeping, in unknown tumults; like soft streamings of celestial music to my too-exasperated heart, came that Evangel. The Universe is not dead and demo-

niacal, a charnel-house with spectres; but godlike, and my Father's!"

"With other eyes, too, could I now look upon my fellow man: with an infinite Love, an infinite Pity. Poor, wandering, wayward man! Art thou not tried, and beaten with stripes, even as I am? Ever, whether thou bear the royal mantle or the beggar's gabardine, art thou not so weary, so heavy-laden; and thy Bed of Rest is but a Grave. O my Brother, my Brother, why cannot I shelter thee in my bosom, and wipe away all tears from thy eyes! — Truly, the din of many-voiced Life, which, in this solitude, with the mind's organ, I could hear, was no longer a maddening discord, but a melting one; like inarticulate cries, and sobbings of a dumb creature, which in the ear of Heaven are prayers. The poor Earth, with her poor joys, was now my needy Mother, not my cruel Stepdame; Man, with his so mad Wants and so mean Endeavours, had become the dearer to me; and even for his sufferings and his sins, I now first named him Brother. Thus was I standing in the porch of that *Sanctuary of Sorrow*; by strange, steep ways had I too been guided thither; and ere long its sacred gates would open, and the '*Divine Depth of Sorrow*' lie disclosed to me."

The Professor says, he here first got eye on the Knot that had been strangling him, and straightway could unfasten it, and was free. "A vain interminable controversy," writes he, "touching what is at present called Origin of Evil, or some such thing, arises in every soul, since the beginning of the world; and in every soul, that would pass from idle Suffering into actual Endeavouring, must first be put an end to. The most, in our time, have to go content with a simple, incomplete enough Suppression of this controversy; to a few some Solution of it is indispensable. In every new era, too, such Solution comes-out in different terms; and ever the Solution of the last era has become obsolete, and is found unserviceable. For it is man's nature to change his Dialect from century to century; he cannot help it though he would. The authentic *Church-Catechism* of our present

century has not yet fallen into my hands: meanwhile, for my own private behoof I attempt to elucidate the matter so. Man's Unhappiness, as I construe, comes of his Greatness; it is because there is an Infinite in him, which with all his cunning he cannot quite bury under the Finite. Will the whole Finance Ministers and Upholsterers and Confectioners of modern Europe undertake, in joint-stock company, to make one Shoebblack HAPPY? They cannot accomplish it, above an hour or two: for the Shoebblack also has a Soul quite other than his Stomach; and would require, if you consider it, for his permanent satisfaction and saturation, simply this allotment, no more, and no less: *God's infinite Universe altogether to himself*, therein to enjoy infinitely, and fill every wish as fast as it rose. Oceans of Hochheimer,¹ a Throat like that of Ophiuchus:² speak not of them; to the infinite Shoebblack they are as nothing. No sooner is your ocean filled, than he grumbles that it might have been of better vintage. Try him with half of a Universe, of an Omnipotence, he sets to quarelling with the proprietor of the other half, and declares himself the most maltreated of men. — Always there is a black spot in our sunshine: it is even, as I said, the *Shadow of Ourselves*.

"But the whim we have of Happiness is somewhat thus. By certain valuations, and averages, of our own striking, we come upon some sort of average terrestrial lot; this we fancy belongs to us by nature, and of indefeasible right. It is simple payment of our wages, of our deserts; requires neither thanks nor complaint; only such *overplus* as there may be do we account Happiness; any *deficit* again is Misery. Now consider that we have the valuation of our own deserts ourselves, and what a fund of Self-conceit there is in each of us, — do you wonder that the balance should so often dip the wrong way, and many a Blockhead cry: See there, what a payment; was ever worthy gentleman so used! — I tell thee, Blockhead, it all comes of thy Vanity; of what thou

¹ Hochheimer, a Rhine wine.

² Ophiuchus, a constellation supposed to resemble a man holding a serpent.

fanciest those same deserts of thine to be. Fancy that thou deservest to be hanged (as is most likely), thou wilt feel it happiness to be only shot: fancy that thou deservest to be hanged in a hair-halter, it will be a luxury to die in hemp.

“So true is it, what I then said, that *the Fraction of Life can be increased in value not so much by increasing your Numerator as by lessening your Denominator*. Nay, unless my Algebra deceive me, *Unity* itself divided by *Zero* will give *Infinity*. Make thy claim of wages a zero, then; thou hast the world under thy feet. Well did the Wisest of our time write: ‘It is only with Renunciation (*Entsagen*) that Life, properly speaking, can be said to begin.’

“I asked myself: What is this that, ever since earliest years, thou hast been fretting and fuming, and lamenting and self-tormenting, on account of? Say it in a word: is it not because thou art not HAPPY? Because the THOU (sweet gentleman) is not sufficiently honoured, nourished, soft-bedded, and lovingly cared-for? Foolish soul! What Act of Legislature was there that *thou* shouldst be Happy? A little while ago thou hadst no right to *be* at all. What if thou wert born and predestined not to be Happy, but to be Unhappy! Art thou nothing other than a Vulture, then, that fliest through the Universe seeking after somewhat to *eat*; and shrieking dolefully because carrion enough is not given thee? Close thy *Byron*; open thy *Goethe*.”¹

“*Es leuchtet mir ein*, I see a glimpse of it!” cries he elsewhere: “there is in man a HIGHER than Love of Happiness: he can do without Happiness, and instead thereof find Blessedness! Was it not to preach-forth this same HIGHER that sages and martyrs, the poet and the Priest, in all times, have spoken and suffered; bearing testimony, through life and through death, of the Godlike that is in Man, and how in the Godlike only has he Strength and Freedom? Which God-inspired Doctrine art thou also honoured to be taught:

¹ Byron and Goethe represent morbid pessimism and healthy optimism, respectively. Of Goethe, Carlyle writes to Emerson: “His is the only *healthy* mind, of any extent, that I have found in Europe, for long generations.”

O Heavens! and broken with manifold merciful Afflictions, even till thou become contrite, and learn it! O, thank thy Destiny for these; thankfully bear what yet remain: thou hadst need of them; the Self in thee needed to be annihilated. By benignant fever-paroxysms is Life rooting out the deep-seated chronic Disease, and triumphs over Death. On the roaring billows of Time, thou art not engulfed, but borne aloft into the azure of Eternity. Love not Pleasure; love God. This is the EVERLASTING YEA, wherein all contradiction is solved: wherein whoso walks and works, it is well with him." . . .

Or, to give the wearied reader relief, and bring it to an end, let him take the following perhaps more intelligible passage:

"To me, in this our life," says the Professor, "which is an internecine warfare with the Time-spirit, other warfare seems questionable. Hast thou in any way a Contention with thy brother, I advise thee, think well what the meaning thereof is. If thou gauge it to the bottom, it is simply this: 'Fellow, see! thou art taking more than thy share of Happiness in the world, something from *my* share: which, by the Heavens, thou shalt not; nay I will fight thee rather.' — Alas, and the whole lot to be divided is such a beggarly matter, truly a 'feast of shells,' for the substance has been spilled out: not enough to quench one Appetite; and the collective human species clutching at them! — Can we not, in all such cases, rather say: 'Take it, thou too-ravenous individual; take that pitiful additional fraction of a share, which I reckoned mine, but which thou so wantest; take it with a blessing: would to Heaven I had enough for thee!' — If Fichte's ¹ *Wissenschaftslehre* be, 'to a certain extent, Applied Christianity' surely still to a greater extent, so is this. We have here not a Whole Duty of Man, yet a Half Duty, namely the Passive half: could we but do it, as we can demonstrate it!

"But indeed Conviction, were it never so excellent, is worthless till it convert itself into Conduct. Nay, properly

¹ Fichte (1796-1879), a German transcendental philosopher, frequently quoted by Carlyle.

Conviction is not possible till then; inasmuch as all Speculation is by nature endless, formless, a vortex amid vortices: only by a felt indubitable certainty of Experience does it find any centre to revolve round, and so fashion itself into a system. Most true is it, as a wise man teaches us, that 'Doubt of any sort cannot be removed except by Action.' On which ground, too, let him who gropes painfully in darkness or uncertain light, and prays vehemently that the dawn may ripen into day, lay this other precept well to heart, which to me was of invaluable service: '*Do the duty which lies nearest thee,*' which thou knowest to be a duty! Thy second Duty will already have become clearer.¹

"May we not say, however, that the hour of Spiritual Enfranchisement is even this: When your Ideal World, wherein the whole man has been dimly struggling and inexpressibly languishing to work, becomes revealed, and thrown open; and you discover, with amazement enough, like the Lothario in *Wilhelm Meister*, that your 'America is here or nowhere'?² The Situation that has not its Duty, its Ideal, was never yet occupied by man. Yes here, in this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable Actual, wherein thou even now standest, here or nowhere is thy Ideal: work it out therefrom; and working, believe, live, be free. Fool! the Ideal is in thyself, the impediment too is in thyself: thy Condition is but the stuff thou art to shape that same Ideal out of: what matters whether such stuff be of this sort or that, so the Form thou give it be heroic, be poetic? O thou

¹ In this paragraph we find the germ of Carlyle's later teachings known as "The Gospel of Work." Cf. the chapter on *Helotage*, and in *Past and Present* the chapters *Labour* and *Reward*.

² "Hier, oder nirgends, ist Amerika." (*Wilhelm Meister*, vii. 3.) The context is as follows: "In America I fancied that I might accomplish something, I hoped to become useful and essential; if any task was not begirt with a thousand dangers I considered it trivial, unworthy of me. How differently do matters now appear. How precious, how important seems the duty which is nearest me, whatever it may be!" "I recollect the letter which you sent me from the western world," said Jarno, "it contained the words 'I will return;' and in my house, amid my fields, and among my people, I will say: Here or Nowhere is America!"

that pinest in the imprisonment of the Actual, and criest bitterly to the gods for a kingdom wherein to rule and create, know this of a truth: the thing thou seekest is already with thee, 'here or nowhere,' couldst thou only see!

"But it is with man's Soul as it was with Nature: the beginning of Creation is — Light. Till the eye have vision, the whole members are in bonds. Divine moment, when over the tempest-tost Soul, as once over the wild-weltering Chaos, it is spoken: Let there be Light! Ever to the greatest that has felt such moment, is it not miraculous and God-announcing; even as, under simpler figures, to the simplest and least. The mad primeval Discord is hushed; the rudely-jumbled conflicting elements bind themselves into separate Firmaments: deep silent rock-foundations are built beneath; and the skyey vault with its everlasting Luminaries above: instead of a dark wasteful Chaos, we have a blooming, fertile, heaven-encompassed World.

"I too could now say to myself: Be no longer a Chaos, but a World, or even Worldkin. Produce! Produce! Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a Product, produce it, in God's name! 'Tis the utmost thou hast in thee: out with it, then. Up, up! Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy whole might. Work while it is called Today; for the Night cometh, wherein no man can work."

III. 4. *Helotage*¹

. . . First, then, remark that Teufelsdröckh, as a speculative Radical, has his own notions about human dignity; that the Zähdarm palaces and courtesies have not made him forgetful of the Futteral cottages. On the blank cover of Heuschrecke's Tract we find the following indistinctly engrossed:

"Two men I honour, and no third. First, the toilworn

¹ Helotage. The helot in ancient Sparta was intermediate in status between a slave and a freeman. Helotage or helotism (the ordinary form) is, therefore, a system under which one class of society is treated as a permanently inferior order.

Craftsman that with earth-made Implement laboriously conquers the earth, and makes her man's. Venerable to me is the hard Hand; crooked, coarse; wherein notwithstanding lies a cunning virtue indefeasibly royal, as of the Sceptre of this Planet. Venerable too is the rugged face, all weather-tanned, besoiled, with its rude intelligence; for it is the face of a Man living manlike. O, but the more venerable for thy rudeness, and even because we must pity as well as love thee! Hardly-entreated Brother! For us was thy back so bent, for us were thy straight limbs and fingers so deformed: thou wert our Conscript, on whom the lot fell, and fighting our battles wert so marred. For in thee too lay a god-created Form, but it was not to be unfolded; encrusted must it stand with the thick adhesions and defacements of Labour: and thy body, like thy soul, was not to know freedom. Yet toil on, toil on: *thou* art in thy duty, be out of it who may; thou toilest for the altogether indispensable, for daily bread.

"A second man I honour, and still more highly: Him who is seen toiling for the spiritually indispensable; not daily bread, but the bread of Life. Is he not too in his duty; endeavouring towards inward Harmony; revealing this, by act or by word, through all his outward endeavours, be they high or low? Highest of all, when his outward and his inward endeavour are one: when we can name him Artist; not earthly Craftsman only, but inspired Thinker, who with heaven-made Implement conquers Heaven for us! If the poor and humble toil that we have Food, must not the high and glorious toil for him in return, that he have Light, have Guidance, Freedom, Immortality? — These two, in all their degrees, I honour: all else is chaff and dust, which let the wind blow whither it listeth.

"Unspeakably touching is it, however, when I find both dignities united; and he that must toil outwardly for the lowest of man's wants, is also toiling inwardly for the highest. Sublimar in this world know I nothing than a Peasant Saint, could such now anywhere be met with. Such a one will take thee back to Nazareth itself; thou wilt see the splendour

of Heaven spring forth from the humblest depths of Earth, like a light shining in great darkness."

And again: "It is not because of his toils that I lament for the poor: we must all toil, or steal (howsoever we name our stealing), which is worse; no faithful workman finds his task a pastime. The poor is hungry and athirst; but for him also there is food and drink: he is heavy-laden and weary, but for him also the Heavens send Sleep, and of the deepest; in his smoky cribs, a clear dewy heaven of Rest envelops him, and fitful glitterings of cloud-skirted Dreams. But what I do mourn over is, that the lamp of his soul should go out; that no ray of heavenly, or even of earthly knowledge, should visit him; but only, in the haggard darkness, like two spectres, Fear and Indignation bear him company. Alas, while the Body stands so broad and brawny, must the Soul lie blinded, dwarfed, stupefied, almost annihilated! Alas, was this too a breath of God; bestowed in Heaven, but on earth never to be unfolded! — That there should one Man die ignorant who had capacity for Knowledge, this I call a tragedy, were it to happen more than twenty times in the minute, as by some computations it does. The miserable fraction of Science which our united Mankind, in a wide Universe of Nescience, has acquired, why is not this, with all diligence, imparted to all?"

Quite in an opposite strain is the following:¹ "The old Spartans had a wiser method; and went out and hunted-down their Helots, and speared and spitted them, when they grew too numerous. With our improved fashions of hunting, Herr Hofrath, now after the invention of fire-arms, and standing-armies, how much easier were such a hunt! Perhaps in the most thickly-peopled country, some three days annually might suffice to shoot all the able-bodied Paupers that had accumulated within the year. Let Governments

¹ The following passage is decidedly Swiftian in its savage irony. It was perhaps suggested by Swift's *A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People in Ireland from Being a Burden to Their Parents or Country*, in which he suggests the use of the tender bodies of babies as food for the starving population.

think of this. The expense were trifling: nay the very carcasses would pay for it. Have them salted and barrelled; could not you victual therewith, if not Army and Navy, yet richly such infirm Paupers, in workhouses and elsewhere, as enlightened Charity, dreading no evil of them, might see good to keep alive?"

"And yet," writes he farther on, "there must be something wrong. A full-formed Horse will, in any market, bring from twenty to as high as two-hundred Friedrichs d'or: such is his worth to the world. A full-formed Man is not only worth nothing to the world, but the world could afford him a round sum would he simply engage to go and hang himself. Nevertheless, which of the two was the more cunningly-devised article, even as an Engine? Good Heavens! A white European Man, standing on his two Legs, with his two five-fingered Hands at his shackle-bones, and miraculous head on his shoulders, is worth, I should say, from fifty to a hundred Horses!"

"True, thou Gold-Hofrath," cries the Professor elsewhere: "too crowded indeed! Meanwhile, what portion of this inconsiderable terraqueous Globe have ye actually tilled and delved, till it will grow no more? How thick stands your Population in the Pampas and Savannas of America; round ancient Carthage, and in the interior of Africa; on both slopes of the Altaic chain, in the central platform of Asia; in Spain, Greece, Turkey, Crim Tartary, the Curragh of Kildare? One man, in one year, as I have understood it, if you lend him Earth, will feed himself and nine others. Alas, where now are the Hengsts and Alarics¹ of our still-growing, still-expanding Europe; who, when their home is grown too narrow, will enlist, and, like Fire-pillars, guide onwards those superfluous masses of indomitable living Valour; equipped, not now with the battle-axe and war-chariot, but with the steam-engine and ploughshare? Where are they? — Preserving their Game!"

¹ Hengst, see note 4, p. 4; Alaric (376-410), king of the west Goths, invader of Greece (396) and Italy (400 and 408).

III. 8. *Natural Supernaturalism*

. . . "Deep has been, and is, the significance of Miracles," thus quietly begins the Professor: "far deeper perhaps than we imagine. Meanwhile, the question of questions were: What specially is a Miracle? To that Dutch King of Siam, an icicle had been a miracle; whoso had carried with him an air-pump, and vial of vitriolic ether, might have worked a miracle. To my Horse, again, who unhappily is still more unscientific, do not I work a miracle, and magical '*Open sesame*'! every time I please to pay twopence, and open for him an impassable *Schlagbaum*, or shut Turnpike?

"'But is not a real Miracle simply a violation of the Laws of Nature?' ask several. Whom I answer by this new question: What are the Laws of Nature? To me perhaps the rising of one from the dead were no violation of these Laws, but a confirmation; were some far deeper Laws now first penetrated into, and by Spiritual Force, even as the rest have all been, brought to bear on us with its Material Force.¹ . . .

"'But is it not the deepest Law of Nature that she be constant?' cries an illuminated class: 'Is not the Machine of the Universe fixed to move by unalterable Rules?' Probable enough, good friends: nay I, too, must believe that the God, whom ancient inspired men assert to be 'without variableness or shadow of turning,' does indeed never change; that Nature, that the Universe, which no one whom it so pleases can be prevented from calling a Machine, does move by the most unalterable rules. And now of you, too, I make the old inquiry: What those same unalterable rules, forming the complete Statute-Book of Nature, may possibly be?

"They stand written in our Works of Science, say you; in the accumulated records of Man's Experience? — Was Man with his Experience present at the Creation, then, to

¹ Cf. Emerson, *The Transcendentalist*, p. 335: "The Transcendentalist adopts the whole principle of spiritual doctrine. He believes in Miracle, in the perpetual openness of the human mind to new influx of light and power; he believes in inspiration and in ecstasy."

see how it all went on? Have any deepest scientific individuals¹ yet dived down to the foundations of the Universe, and gauged everything there? Did the Maker take them into His counsel; that they read His groundplan of the incomprehensible All; and can say, This stands marked therein, and no more than this? Alas, not in anywise!² These scientific individuals have been nowhere but where we also are; have seen some handbreadths deeper than we see into the Deep that is infinite, without bottom as without shore.

"Laplace's Book on the Stars, wherein he exhibits that certain Planets, with their Satellites, gyrate round our worthy Sun, at a rate and in a course which, by greatest good fortune, he and the like of him have succeeded in detecting, — is to me as precious as to another. But is this what thou namest 'Mechanism of the Heavens,' and 'System of the World': this, wherein Sirius and the Pleiades, and all Herschel's Fifteen-thousand Suns per minute, being left out, some paltry handful of Moons, and inert Balls, had been — looked at, nicknamed, and marked in the Zodiacal Way-bill; so that we can now prate of their Whereabout; their How, their Why, their What, being hid from us, as in the signless Inane?"

"System of Nature! To the wisest man, wide as is his vision, Nature remains of quite *infinite* depth, of quite infinite expansion; and all Experience thereof limits itself to some few computed centuries and measured square-miles.

¹ William Knight (*Retrospects*, p. 4) quotes the following remark of Carlyle's: "I think that they scienteefic men must expect God Almighty to come some fine mornin, and gie them a patent to make a ward; they seem sae curious to know how this ane was made."

² The ideas and much of the phraseology of this paragraph are taken from the 38th chapter of the *Book of Job*, "one of the grandest things ever written with pen. . . . A noble Book; all men's Book! It is our first, oldest statement of the never-ending Problem, — man's destiny, and God's way with him here on earth." (*Hero as Prophet*, p. 67.)

Cf. the following verses: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth, declare if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who laid the corner-stone thereof?"

The course of Nature's phases, on this our little fraction of a Planet, is partially known to us: but who knows what deeper courses these depend on; what infinitely larger Cycle (of causes) our little Epicycle revolves on? To the Minnow every cranny and pebble, and quality and accident, of its little native Creek may have become familiar: but does the Minnow understand the Ocean Tides and periodic Currents, the Trade-winds, and Monsoons, and Moon's Eclipses; by all which the condition of its little Creek is regulated, and may, from time to time (*un*miraculously enough), be quite overset and reversed? Such a minnow is Man; his Creek this Planet Earth; his Ocean the immeasurable All; his Monsoons and periodic Currents the mysterious Course of Providence through Æons of Æons.

"We speak of the Volume of Nature: and truly a Volume it is, — whose Author and Writer is God. To read it! Dost thou, does man, so much as well know the Alphabet thereof? With its Words, Sentences, and grand descriptive Pages, poetical and philosophical, spread out through Solar Systems, and Thousands of Years, we shall not try thee. It is a Volume written in celestial hieroglyphs, in the true Sacred-writing; of which even Prophets are happy that they can read here a line and there a line. As for your Institutes, and Academies of Science, they strive bravely; and, from amid the thick-crowded, inextricably intertwined hieroglyphic writing, pick out, by dextrous combination, some Letters in the vulgar Character, and therefrom put together this and the other economic Recipe, of high avail in Practice. That Nature is more than some boundless Volume of such Recipes, or huge, well-nigh inexhaustible Domestic-Cookery Book, of which the whole secret will in this manner one day evolve itself, the fewest dream."

"Custom," continues the Professor, "doth make dotards of us all. Consider well, thou wilt find that Custom is the greatest of Weavers; and weaves air-raiment for all the Spirits of the Universe; whereby indeed these dwell with us visibly, as ministering servants, in our houses and workshops:

but their spiritual nature becomes, to the most, forever hidden. Philosophy complains that Custom has hoodwinked us, from the first; that we do everything by Custom, even Believe by it; that our very Axioms, let us boast of Free-thinking as we may, are oftenest simply such Beliefs as we have never heard questioned. Nay, what is Philosophy throughout but a continual battle against Custom; an ever-renewed effort to *transcend* the sphere of blind Custom, and so become Transcendental?

"Innumerable are the illusions and legerdemain-tricks of Custom: but of all these, perhaps the cleverest is her knack of persuading us that the Miraculous, by simple repetition, ceases to be Miraculous. True, it is by this means we live; for man must work as well as wonder: and herein is Custom so far a kind nurse, guiding him to his true benefit. But she is a fond foolish nurse, or rather we are false foolish nurselings, when, in our resting and reflecting hours, we prolong the same deception. Am I to view the Stupendous with stupid indifference, because I have seen it twice, or two-hundred or two-million times?¹ There is no reason in Nature or Art why I should: unless, indeed, I am a mere Work-machine, for whom the divine gift of Thought were no other than the terrestrial gift of Steam is to the Steam-engine; a power whereby cotton might be spun, and money and money's worth realised. . . .

"But deepest of all illusory Appearances, for hiding Wonder, as for many other ends, are your two grand fundamental world-enveloping Appearances, SPACE and TIME. These, as spun and woven for us from before Birth itself, to clothe our celestial ME for dwelling here, and yet to blind it, — lie all-embracing, as the universal canvas, or warp and woof, whereby all minor Illusions, in this Phantasm Existence, weave and paint themselves. In vain, while here on Earth, shall you endeavour to strip them off; you can,

¹ Cf. Emerson, *Nature*, p. 1: "If the stars should appear one night in a thousand years, how would men believe and adore; and preserve for many generations the remembrance of the City of God which had been shown."

at best, but rend them asunder for moments, and look through.

“Fortunatus had a wishing Hat, which when he put on, and wished himself Anywhere, behold he was There. By this means had Fortunatus triumphed over Space, he had annihilated Space; for him there was no Where, but all was Here. Were a Hatter to establish himself, in the Wahngasse of Weissnichtwo, and make felts of this sort for all mankind, what a world we should have of it! Still stranger, should, on the opposite side of the street, another Hatter establish himself; and, as his fellow-craftsman made Space-annihilating Hats, make Time-annihilating! Of both would I purchase, were it with my last groschen; but chiefly of this latter. To clap-on your felt, and, simply by wishing that you were *Anywhere*, straightway to be *There!* Next to clap-on your other felt, and, simply by wishing that you were *Anywhen*, straightway to be *Then!* This were indeed the grander: shooting at will from the Fire-Creation of the World to its Fire-Consummation; here historically present in the First Century, conversing face to face with Paul and Seneca; there prophetically in the Thirty-first, conversing also face to face with other Pauls and Senecas, who as yet stand hidden in the depth of that late time!

“Or thinkest thou it were impossible, unimaginable? Is the Past annihilated, then, or only past; is the Future non-extant, or only future? Those mystic faculties of thine, Memory and Hope, already answer: already through those mystic avenues, thou the Earth-blinded summonest both Past and Future, and communest with them, though as yet darkly, and with mute beckonings. The curtains of Yesterday drop down, the curtains of Tomorrow roll up; but Yesterday and Tomorrow both *are*. Pierce through the Time-element, glance into the Eternal. Believe what thou findest written in the sanctuaries of Man’s Soul, even as all Thinkers, in all ages, have devoutly read it there: that Time and Space are not God, but creations of God; that with God as it is a universal *HERE*, so it is an everlasting *Now*.

“And seest thou therein any glimpse of IMMORTALITY? — O Heaven! Is the white Tomb of our Loved One, who died from our arms, and had to be left behind us there, which rises in the distance, like a pale, mournfully receding Milestone, to tell how many toilsome uncheered miles we have journeyed on alone, — but a pale spectral Illusion! Is the lost Friend still mysteriously Here, even as we are Here mysteriously, with God! — Know of a truth that only the Time-shadows have perished, or are perishable; that the real Being of whatever was, and whatever is, and whatever will be, *is* even now and forever. This, should it unhappily seem new, thou mayest ponder at thy leisure; for the next twenty years, or the next twenty centuries: believe it thou must; understand it thou canst not.

“That the Thought-forms, Space and Time, wherein, once for all, we are sent into this Earth to live, should condition and determine our whole Practical reasonings, conceptions, and imagings or imaginings, seems altogether fit, just, and unavoidable. But that they should, furthermore, usurp such sway over pure spiritual Meditation, and blind us to the wonder everywhere lying close on us, seems nowise so. Admit Space and Time to their due rank as Forms of Thought; nay even, if thou wilt, to their quite undue Rank of Realities: and consider, then, with thyself how their thin disguises hide from us the brightest God-effulgences! Thus, were it not miraculous, could I stretch forth my hand and clutch the Sun? Yet thou seest me daily stretch forth my hand and therewith clutch many a thing, and swing it hither and thither. Art thou a grown baby, then, to fancy that the Miracle lies in miles of distance, or in pounds avoirdupois of weight; and not to see that the true inexplicable God-revealing Miracle lies in this, that I can stretch forth my hand at all; that I have free Force to clutch aught therewith? Innumerable other of this sort are the deceptions, and wonder-hiding stupefactions, which Space practises on us.

“Still worse is it with regard to Time. Your grand anti-magician, and universal wonder-hider, is this same lying

Time. Had we but the Time-annihilating Hat, to put on for once only, we should see ourselves in a World of Miracles, wherein all fabled or authentic Thaumaturgy, and feats of Magic, were outdone. But unhappily we have not such a Hat; and man, poor fool that he is, can seldom and scantily help himself without one.

"Were it not wonderful, for instance, had Orpheus, or Amphion,¹ built the walls of Thebes by the mere sound of his Lyre? Yet tell me, Who built these walls of Weissnichtwo; summoning out all the sandstone rocks, to dance along from the *Steinbruch* (now a huge Troglodyte Chasm, with frightful green-mantled pools); and shape themselves into Doric and Ionic pillars, squared ashlar houses and noble streets? Was it not the still higher Orpheus, or Orpheuses, who, in past centuries, by the divine Music of Wisdom, succeeded in civilising Man? Our highest Orpheus walked in Judea, eighteen-hundred years ago: his sphere-melody, flowing in wild native tones, took captive the ravished souls of men; and, being of a truth sphere-melody, still flows and sounds, though now with a thousandfold accompaniments, and rich symphonies, through all our hearts; and modulates, and divinely leads them. Is that a wonder, which happens, in two hours; and does it cease to be wonderful if happening in two million? Not only was Thebes built by the music of an Orpheus; but without the music of some inspired Orpheus was no city ever built, no work that man glories in ever done.

"Sweep away the Illusion of Time; glance, if thou have eyes, from the near moving-cause to its far-distant Mover: The stroke that came transmitted through a whole galaxy of elastic balls, was it less a stroke than if the last ball only had been struck and sent flying? O, could I (with the Time-annihilating Hat) transport thee direct from the Beginnings to the Endings, how were thy eyesight unsealed, and thy

¹ Orpheus, in Greek legend, the son of Apollo, whose sweet lyre charmed all animate and inanimate objects. Amphion, with his brother Zethus, took possession of Thebes, and when the walls were building the stones moved of their own accord to the music of Amphion's lyre.

heart set flaming in the Light-sea of celestial wonder! Then sawest thou that this fair Universe, were it in the meanest province thereof, is in very deed the star-domed City of God; that through every star, through every grass-blade, and most through every Living Soul, the glory of a present God still beams. But Nature, which is the Time-vesture of God, and reveals Him to the wise, hides Him from the foolish.

"Again, could anything be more miraculous than an actual authentic Ghost? The English Johnson longed, all his life, to see one; but could not, though he went to Cock Lane, and thence to the church-vaults, and tapped on coffins.¹ Foolish Doctor! Did he never, with the mind's eye as well as with the body's, look round him into that full tide of human Life he so loved; did he never so much as look into Himself? The good Doctor was a Ghost, as actual and authentic as heart could wish; well-nigh a million of Ghosts were travelling the streets by his side. Once more I say, sweep away the illusion of Time; compress the three-score years into three minutes: what else was he, what else are we? Are we not Spirits, that are shaped into a body, into an Appearance; and that fade away again into air and Invisibility? This is no metaphor, it is a simple scientific *fact*: we start out of Nothingness, take figure, and are Apparitions; round us, as round the veriest spectre, is Eternity; and to Eternity minutes are as years and æons. Come there not tones of Love and Faith, as from celestial harp-strings, like the Song of beatified Souls? And again, do not we squeak and jibber (in our discordant, screech-owlsh debates and recriminations); and glide bodeful, and feeble, and fearful; or uproar (*poltern*), and revel in our mad Dance of the Dead, —till the scent of the morning air summons us to our still Home; and dreamy Night becomes awake and Day? Where now is Alexander of Macedon: does the steel Host, that yelled in fierce battle-shouts at Issus and Arbela, remain behind him; or have they all vanished utterly, even as perturbed Goblins must? Napoleon too, and his Moscow Re-

¹ For the story of Dr. Johnson and the Cock Lane Ghost, see Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, I, 406-8.

treats and Austerlitz Campaigns! Was it all other than the veriest Spectre-hunt; which has now, with its howling tumult that made Night hideous, flitted away? — Ghosts! There are nigh a thousand-million walking the Earth openly at noontide; some half-hundred have vanished from it, some half-hundred have arisen in it, ere thy watch ticks once.

“O Heaven, it is mysterious, it is awful to consider that we not only carry each a future Ghost within him; but are, in very deed, Ghosts! These Limbs, whence had we them; this stormy Force; this life-blood with its burning Passion? They are dust and shadow; a Shadow-system gathered round our ME; wherein, through some moments or years, the Divine Essence is to be revealed in the Flesh. That warrior on his strong war-horse, fire flashes through his eyes; force dwells in his arm and heart: but warrior and war-horse are a vision; a revealed Force, nothing more. Stately they tread the Earth, as if it were a firm substance: fool! the Earth is but a film; it cracks in twain, and warrior and war-horse sink beyond plummet’s sounding. Plummet’s? Fantasy herself will not follow them. A little while ago, they were not; a little while, and they are not, their very ashes are not.

“So it has been from the beginning, so it will be to the end. Generation after generation takes to itself the Form of a Body; and forth-issuing from Cimmerian Night, on Heaven’s mission APPEARS. What Force and Fire is in each he expends: one grinding in the mill of Industry; one hunter-like climbing the giddy Alpine heights of Science; one madly dashed in pieces on the rocks of Strife, in war with his fellow: — and then the Heaven-sent is recalled; his earthly Vesture falls away, and soon even to Sense becomes a vanished Shadow. Thus, like some wild-flaming, wild-thundering train of Heaven’s Artillery, does this mysterious MANKIND thunder and flame, in long-drawn, quick-succeeding grandeur, through the unknown Deep. Thus, like a God-created, fire-breathing Spirit-host, we emerge from the Inane; haste stormfully across the astonished Earth; then plunge again into the Inane. Earth’s mountains are levelled, and her

seas filled up, in our passage: can the Earth, which is but dead and a vision, resist Spirits which have reality and are alive? On the hardest adamant some footprint of us is stamped-in; the last Rear of the host will read traces of the earliest Van. But whence? — O Heaven, whither? Sense knows not; Faith knows not; only that it is through Mystery to Mystery, from God and to God.

'We are such stuff

As dreams are made of, and our little Life
Is rounded with a sleep!'”¹

¹ See note 2, p. 4.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

BOOK I

DEATH OF LOUIS XV

CHAPTER I

LOUIS THE WELL-BELOVED

PRESIDENT HÉNAULT, remarking on royal Surnames of Honour how difficult it often is to ascertain not only why, but even when, they were conferred, takes occasion in his sleek official way to make a philosophical reflection. "The Surname of *Bien-aimé* (Well-beloved)," says he, "which Louis XV bears, will not leave posterity in the same doubt. This Prince, in the year 1744, while hastening from one end of his kingdom to the other, and suspending his conquests in Flanders that he might fly to the assistance of Alsace, was arrested at Metz by a malady which threatened to cut short his days. At the news of this, Paris, all in terror, seemed a city taken by storm: the churches resounded with supplications and groans; the prayers of priests and people were every moment interrupted by their sobs: and it was from an interest so dear and tender that this Surname of *Bien-aimé* fashioned itself, — a title higher still than all the rest which this great Prince has earned."

So stands it written; in lasting memorial of that year 1744. Thirty other years have come and gone; and "this great Prince" again lies sick: but in how altered circumstances now! Churches resound not with excessive groanings; Paris is stoically calm: sobs interrupt no prayers, for indeed none are offered: except Priests' Litanies, read or chanted at fixed money-rate per hour, which are not liable to interruption. The shepherd of the people has

been carried home from Little Trianon, heavy of heart, and been put to bed in his own Château of Versailles:¹ the flock knows it, and heeds it not. At most, in the immeasurable tide of French Speech (which ceases not day after day, and only ebbs towards the short hours of night), may this of the royal sickness emerge from time to time as an article of news. Bets are doubtless depending; nay, some people "express themselves loudly in the streets." But for the rest, on green field and steeped city, the May sun shines out, the May evening fades; and men ply their useful or useless business as if no Louis lay in danger.

Dame Dubarry,² indeed, might pray, if she had a talent for it; Duke d'Aiguillon too, Maupeou and the Parlement Maupeou:³ these, as they sit in their high places, with France harnessed under their feet, know well on what basis they continue there. Look to it, D'Aiguillon; sharply as thou didst, from the Mill of St. Cast, on Quiberon and the invading English;⁴ thou "covered if not with glory yet with meal." Fortune was ever accounted inconstant: and each dog has but his day. . . .

¹ The former was the small villa with rustic gardens, built by Louis XV in 1766; it was situated at the extremity of the large park surrounding the magnificent palace of Versailles, which since the time of Louis XIV had been the home of royalty.

² Comtesse du Barry (born in 1744 and guillotined in 1793) was royal mistress during Louis' later years and largely responsible for the vast extravagances which characterized the close of his reign. A woman of great beauty, she was of low birth and vulgar manners; the old nobility despised her upon social grounds. Her personal influence with Louis was supreme and resulted in disastrous appointments; but unlike her predecessor, the Pompadour, she had little ambition, and no aptitude, for ruling.

³ The former was minister of foreign affairs. The latter, who was chancellor, had reduced the Parlement, or supreme judicial body, to absolute subjection to the royal will; it was derisively called the Parlement Maupeou by the people. Both d'Aiguillon and Maupeou acted as instruments of Louis' vicious and impolitic despotism and were objects of popular hatred.

⁴ At the battle of Quiberon (1746), d'Aiguillon, who commanded the French against the British, fled the field to hide in a mill.

Beautiful Armida-Palace,¹ where the inmates live enchanted lives; lapped in soft music of adulation; waited on by the splendours of the world;—which nevertheless hangs wondrously as by a single hair. Should the Most Christian King die; or even get seriously afraid of dying! For, alas, had not the fair haughty Chateauroux² to fly, with wet cheeks and flaming heart, from that Fever-scene at Metz, long since; driven forth by sour shavelings? She hardly returned, when fever and shavelings were both swept into the background. Pompadour too, when Damiens³ wounded Royalty “slightly under the fifth rib,” and our drive to Trianon went off futile, in shrieks and madly shaken torches,—had to pack, and be in readiness: yet did not go, the wound not proving poisoned. For his Majesty has religious faith; believes at least in a Devil. And now a third peril; and who knows what may be in it! For the Doctors look grave; ask privily, If his Majesty had not the small-pox long ago? — and doubt it may have been a false kind. Yes, Maupeou, pucker those sinister brows of thine, and peer out on it with thy malign rat-eyes: it is a questionable case. Sure only that man is mortal; that with the life of one mortal snaps irrevocably the wonderfulest talisman, and all Dubarrydom rushes off, with tumult, into infinite Space; and ye, as subterranean Apparitions are wont, vanish utterly, — leaving only a smell of sulphur!

These, and what holds of these may pray, — to Beelzebub, or whoever will hear them. But from the rest of France

¹ Armida was one of the most seductive heroines of *Jerusalem Delivered*, who by her enchantments held Renaud from joining his fellow crusaders; her palace is typical of fantastic and luxurious sensuality.

² Duchess of Chateauroux (1717-1744), a mistress of Louis XV during his earlier days.

³ The Marquise de la Pompadour (1721-1764) controlled France for nineteen years, dominating the king partly by her beauty, but chiefly by her tact and wit. France owes much to her patronage of the arts, but her influence in state affairs resulted in the loss of the French colonial empire in America and in India. Her power suffered an eclipse for a few days in 1757, when Damiens (a maniac) attacked the king with murderous intent; it was speedily reëstablished and continued until the end of her life.

there comes, as was said, no prayer; or one of an *opposite* character, "expressed openly in the streets." . . . O Hénault! Prayers? From a France smitten (by black-art) with plague after plague; and lying now, in shame and pain, with a Harlot's foot on its neck, what prayer can come? Those lank scarecrows, that prowl hunger-stricken through all highways and byways of French Existence, will they pray? The dull millions that, in the workshop or furrowfield, grind foredone at the wheel of Labour, like haltered gin-horses, if blind so much the quieter? Or they that in the Bicêtre Hospital, "eight to a bed," lie waiting their manumission? Dim are those heads of theirs, dull stagnant those hearts: to them the great Sovereign is known mainly as the great Regrater of Bread.¹ If they hear of his sickness, they will answer with a dull *Tant pis pour lui*;² or with the question, Will he die?

Yes, will he die? that is now, for all France, the grand question, and hope; whereby alone the King's sickness has still some interest.

CHAPTER II

REALIZED IDEALS

SUCH a changed France have we; and a changed Louis. Changed, truly; and further than thou yet seest! — To the eye of History many things, in that sick-room of Louis, are now visible, which to the Courtiers there present were invisible. For indeed it is well said, "in every object there is inexhaustible meaning; the eye sees in it what the eye brings means of seeing." To Newton and to Newton's Dog Diamond,³ what a different pair of Universes; while the painting

¹ The "regrating" or petty commerce in bread, salt, coal, fruit, etc., was strictly supervised by the government; the price of common commodities was thus enhanced and the government was rendered extremely unpopular.

² "So much the worse for him."

³ Sir Isaac Newton's dog, Diamond, acquired lasting fame through overturning a candle, thereby destroying all his master's papers on the theory of light, the result of the labor of twenty years.

on the optical retina of both was, most likely, the same! Let the Reader here, in this sick-room of Louis, endeavour to look with the mind too.

Time was when men could (so to speak) of a given man, by nourishing and decorating him with fit appliances, to the due pitch, *make* themselves a King, almost as the Bees do; and, what was still more to the purpose, loyally obey him when made. The man so nourished and decorated, thenceforth named royal, does verily bear rule; and is said, and even thought, to be, for example, "prosecuting conquests in Flanders," when he lets himself like luggage be carried thither: and no light luggage; covering miles of road. For he has his unblushing Chateauroux, with her bandboxes and rouge-pots, at his side; so that, at every new station, a wooden gallery must be run up between their lodgings. He has not only his *Maison-Bouche*, and *Valetaille*¹ without end, but his very Troop of Players, with their pasteboard coulisses, thunder-barrels, their kettles, fiddles, stage-wardrobes, portable larders (and chaffering and quarrelling enough); all mounted in wagons, tumbrils, second-hand chaises, — sufficient not to conquer Flanders, but the patience of the world. With such a flood of loud jingling appurtenances does he lumber along, prosecuting his conquests in Flanders: wonderful to behold. So nevertheless it was and had been: to some solitary thinker it might seem strange; but even to him, inevitable, not unnatural.

For ours is a most fictile world; and man is the most fingent plastic of creatures. A world not fixable; not fathomable! An unfathomable Somewhat, which is *Not we*; which we can work with, and live amidst, — and model, miraculously in our miraculous Being, and name World. — But if the very Rocks and Rivers (as Metaphysic teaches) are, in strict language, *made* by those Outward Senses of ours, how much more, by the Inward Sense, are all Phenomena of the spiritual kind: Dignities, Authorities, Holies, Unholies! Which inward sense, moreover, is not permanent

¹ The staff of lackeys and valets in charge of the royal meals and service.

like the outward ones, but for ever growing and changing. Does not the Black African take of Sticks and Old Clothes (say, exported Monmouth-Street cast-clothes) what will suffice; and of these, cunningly combining them, fabricate for himself an Eidolon (Idol, or *Thing Seen*), and name it *Mumbo-Jumbo*; which he can thenceforth pray to, with upturned awestruck eye, not without hope? The white European mocks; but ought rather to consider; and see whether he, at home, could not do the like a little more wisely.

So it *was*, we say, in those conquests of Flanders, thirty years ago: but so it no longer is. Alas, much more lies sick than poor Louis: not the French King only, but the French Kingship; this too, after long rough tear and wear, is breaking down. The world is all so changed; so much that seemed vigorous has sunk decrepit, so much that was not is beginning to be! — Borne over the Atlantic, to the closing ear of Louis, King by the Grace of God, what sounds are these; muffled-ominous, new in our centuries? Boston Harbour is black with unexpected Tea: behold a Pennsylvanian Congress gather; and ere long, on Bunker Hill, DEMOCRACY announcing, in rifle-volleys death-winged, under her Star Banner, to the tune of Yankee-doodle-doo, that she is born, and, whirlwind-like, will envelop the whole world!

Sovereigns die and Sovereignties; how all dies, and is for a Time only; is a "Time-phantasm, yet reckons itself real!" The Merovingian Kings, slowly wending on their bullock-carts through the streets of Paris, with their long hair flowing, have all wended slowly on, — into Eternity: Charlemagne sleeps at Salzburg, with truncheon grounded; only Fable expecting that he will awaken. Charles the Hammer, Pepin Bow-legged, where now is their eye of menace, their voice of command? . . . They are all gone; sunk, — down, down, with the tumult they made; and the rolling and the trampling of ever new generations passes over them; and they hear it not any more for ever.

And yet withal has there not been realized somewhat?

Consider (to go no further) these strong Stone-edifices, and what they hold! Mud-Town of the Borderers (*Lutetia Parisiorum* or *Barisiorum*) has paved itself, has spread over all the Seine Islands, and far and wide on each bank, and become City of Paris, sometimes boasting to be "Athens of Europe," and even "Capital of the Universe." Stone towers frown aloft; long-lasting, grim with a thousand years. Cathedrals are there, and a Creed (or memory of a Creed) in them; Palaces, and a State and Law. Thou seest the Smoke-vapour; *unextinguished* Breath as of a thing living. Labour's thousand hammers ring on her anvils: also a more miraculous Labour works noiselessly, not with the Hand but with the Thought. How have cunning workmen in all crafts, with their cunning head and right-hand, tamed the Four Elements to be their ministers; yoking the Winds to their Sea-chariot, making the very Stars their Nautical Timepiece; — and written and collected a *Bibliothèque du Roi*; among whose Books is a Hebrew Book! A wondrous race of creatures: *these* have been realized, and what of Skill is in these: call not the Past Time, with all its confused wretchednesses, a lost one.

Observe, however, that of man's whole terrestrial possessions and attainments, unspeakably the noblest are his Symbols, divine or divine-seeming; under which he marches and fights, with victorious assurance, in this life-battle: what we can call his Realized Ideals. Of which realized Ideals, omitting the rest, consider only these two: his Church, or spiritual Guidance; his Kingship, or temporal one. The Church: what a word was there; richer than Golconda¹ and the treasures of the world! In the heart of the remotest mountains rises the little Kirk; the Dead all slumbering round it, under their white memorial-stones, "in hope of a happy resurrection:" — dull wert thou, O Reader, if never in any hour (say of moaning midnight, when such Kirk hung spectral in the sky, and Being was as if swallowed up of Darkness) it spoke to thee — things unspeakable, that

¹ A fort in India, famous for the diamonds and treasure there collected by the Nabobs.

went to thy soul's soul. Strong was he that had a Church, what we can call a Church: he stood thereby, though "in the centre of Immensities, in the conflux of Eternities," yet manlike towards God and man; the vague shoreless Universe had become for him a firm city, and dwelling which he knew. Such virtue was in Belief; in these words, well spoken: *I believe*. Well might men prize their *Credo*, and raise stateliest Temples for it, and reverend Hierarchies, and give it the tithe of their substance; it was worth living for and dying for.

Neither was that an inconsiderable moment when wild armed men first raised their Strongest aloft on the buckler-throne; and, with clanging armour and hearts, said solemnly: Be thou our Acknowledged Strongest! In such Acknowledged Strongest (well named King, *Kön-ning*, Can-ning, or Man that was Able) what a Symbol shone now for them, — significant with the destinies of the world! A Symbol of true Guidance in return for loving Obedience; properly, if he knew it, the prime want of man. A Symbol which might be called sacred; for is there not, in reverence for what is better than we, an indestructible sacredness? On which ground, too, it was well said there lay in the Acknowledged Strongest a divine right; as surely there might in the Strongest, whether Acknowledged or not, — considering *who* it was that made him strong. And so, in the midst of confusions and unutterable incongruities (as all growth is confused), did this of Royalty, with Loyalty environing it, spring up; and grow mysteriously, subduing and assimilating (for a principle of Life was in it); till it also had grown world-great, and was among the main Facts of our modern existence. Such a Fact, that Louis XIV, for example, could answer the expostulatory Magistrate with his "*L'Etat c'est moi* (The State? I am the State);" and be replied to by silence and abashed looks. . . .

How such Ideals do realize themselves; and grow, wondrously, from amid the incongruous ever fluctuating chaos of the Actual: this is what World-History, if it teach any thing, has to teach us. How they grow; and, after long stormy

growth, bloom out mature, supreme; then quickly (for the blossom is brief) fall into decay; sorrowfully dwindle; and crumble down, or rush down, noisily or noiselessly disappearing. The blossom is so brief; as of some centennial Cactus-flower, which after a century of waiting shines out for hours! . . .

In such a decadent age, or one fast verging that way, had our poor Louis been born. Grant also that if the French Kingship had not, by course of Nature, long to live, he of all men was the man to accelerate Nature. The blossom of French Royalty, cactus-like, has accordingly made an astonishing progress. In those Metz days, it was still standing with all its petals, though bedimmed by Orleans Regents and *Roué* Ministers and Cardinals; but now, in 1774, we behold it bald, and the virtue nigh gone out of it.

Disastrous indeed does it look with those same "realized Ideals," one and all! The Church, which in its palmy season, seven hundred years ago, could make an Emperor wait barefoot, in penance-shirt, three days, in the snow,¹ has for centuries seen itself decaying; reduced even to forget old purposes and enmities, and join interest with the Kingship: on this younger strength it would fain stay its decrepitude; and these two will henceforth stand and fall together. Alas, the Sorbonne² still sits there, in its old mansion; but mumbles only jargon of dotage, and no longer leads the consciences of men: not the Sorbonne; it is *Encyclopédies*,³ *Philosophie*, and who knows what nameless innumerable multitude of ready Writers, profane Singers, Romancers, Players, Disputators, and Pamphleteers, that now form the Spiritual Guidance of the world. The world's Practical Guidance too is lost, or has glided into the same miscellaneous hands.

¹ Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand) forced this humiliation upon the Emperor Henry IV at Canossa in 1077.

² The faculty of theology in the University at Paris; to-day, the seat of the faculties of letters and sciences.

³ The Encyclopædia had been published shortly before under the direction of Diderot and a group of philosophers who were known as the Encyclopædists. Because of their fearless criticism of existing abuses, they did much to prepare the mind of France for the coming revolution.

Who is it that the King (*Able-man*, named also *Roi*, *Rex*, or Director) now guides? His own huntsmen and prickers: when there is to be no hunt, it is well said, "*Le Roi ne fera rien* (To-day his Majesty will do *nothing*)."¹ He lives and lingers there, because he is living there, and none has yet laid hands on him.

The Nobles, in like manner, have nearly ceased either to guide or misguide; and are now, as their master is, little more than ornamental figures. It is long since they have done with butchering one another or their king: the Workers, protected, encouraged by Majesty, have ages ago built walled towns, and there ply their crafts; will permit no Robber Baron to "live by the saddle," but maintain a gallows to prevent it. Ever since that period of the *Fronde*,¹ the Noble has changed his fighting sword into a court rapier; and now loyally attends his King as ministering satellite; divides the spoil, not now by violence and murder, but by soliciting and finesse. These men call themselves supports of the throne: singular gilt-pasteboard *caryatides* in that singular edifice! For the rest, their privileges every way are now much curtailed. That Law authorizing a Seigneur, as he returned from hunting, to kill not more than two Serfs, and refresh his feet in their warm blood and bowels, has fallen into perfect desuetude, — and even into incredibility; for if Deputy Lapoule can believe in it, and call for the abrogation of it, so cannot we. No Charolois, for these last fifty years, though never so fond of shooting, has been in use to bring down slaters and plumbers, and see them roll from their roofs; but contents himself with partridges and grouse. Close-viewed, their industry and function is that of dressing gracefully and eating sumptuously. As for their debauchery and depravity, it is perhaps unexampled since the era of Tiberius and Commodus.² Nevertheless, one has still partly a feeling with the lady Maréchale: "Depend upon it, Sir, God thinks

¹ A civil war (1648-1653) which marked the last effort of the nobility to maintain their independence of the royal power.

² Roman emperors, of the first and second centuries, noted for their cruelty and vices.

twice before damning a man of that quality." These people, of old, surely had virtues, uses; or they could not have been there. Nay, one virtue they are still required to have (for mortal man cannot live without a conscience): the virtue of perfect readiness to fight duels.

Such are the shepherds of the people: and now how fares it with the flock? With the flock, as is inevitable, it fares ill, and ever worse. They are not tended, they are only regularly shorn. They are sent for, to do statute-labour, to pay statute taxes; to fatten battlefields (named "bed of honour") with their bodies, in quarrels which are not theirs; their hand and toil is in every possession of man; but for themselves they have little or no possession. Untaught, un comforted, unfed; to pine stagnantly in thick obscurity, in squalid destitution and obstruction: this is the lot of the millions; *peuple taillable et corvéable à merci et miséricorde*.¹ In Brittany they once rose in revolt at the first introduction of Pendulum Clocks; thinking it had something to do with the *Gabelle*.² Paris requires to be cleared out periodically by the Police; and the horde of hunger-stricken vagabonds to be sent wandering again over space — for a time. "During one such periodical clearance," says Lacretelle, "in May, 1750, the Police had presumed withal to carry off some reputable people's children, in the hope of extorting ransoms for them. The mothers fill the public places with cries of despair; crowds gather, get excited; so many women in distraction run about exaggerating the alarm: an absurd and horrid fable rises among the people; it is said that the Doctors have ordered a Great Person to take baths of young human blood for the restoration of his own, all spoiled by debaucheries. Some of the rioters," adds Lacretelle, quite coolly, "were hanged on the following day;" the Police went on. O ye poor naked wretches! and this then is your

¹ "People subject to *taille* and *corvée*, according to the grace and pity [of the State]." The *taille* was the chief direct tax of France, generally levied upon land; the nobles were exempt. The *corvée* was the labor which the peasants owed the State or their lord.

² The tax on salt.

inarticulate cry to Heaven, as of a dumb tortured animal, crying from uttermost depths of pain and debasement? Do these azure skies, like a dead crystalline vault, only reverberate the echo of it on you? Respond to it only by "hanging on the following days?" — Not so: not for ever! Ye are heard in Heaven. And the answer too will come, — in a horror of great darkness, and shakings of the world, and a cup of trembling which all the nations shall drink.

Remark, meanwhile, how from amid the wrecks and dust of this universal Decay new Powers are fashioning themselves, adapted to the new time, and its destinies. Besides the old Noblesse, originally of Fighters, there is a new recognized Noblesse of Lawyers; whose gala-day and proud battle-day even now is. An unrecognized Noblesse of Commerce; powerful enough, with money in its pocket. Lastly, powerfulest of all, least recognized of all, a Noblesse of Literature; without steel on their thigh, without gold in their purse, but with the "grand thaumaturgic faculty of Thought" in their head. French Philosophism has arisen; in which little word how much do we include! Here, indeed, lies properly the cardinal symptom of the whole wide-spread malady. Faith is gone out; Scepticism is come in. Evil abounds and accumulates; no man has Faith to withstand it, to amend it, to begin by amending himself; it must even go on accumulating. While hollow languor and vacuity is the lot of the Upper, and want and stagnation of the Lower, and universal misery is very certain, what other thing is certain? That a Lie cannot be believed! Philosophism knows only this: her other Belief is mainly, that in spiritual supersensual matters no Belief is possible. Unhappy! Nay, as yet the Contradiction of a Lie is some kind of Belief; but the Lie with its Contradiction once swept away, what will remain? The five unsatiated Senses will remain, the sixth insatiable Sense (of Vanity); the whole *daemonic* nature of man will remain, — hurled forth to rage blindly without rule or rein; savage itself, yet with all the tools and weapons of civilization: a spectacle new in History.

In such a France, as in a Powder-tower, where fire

unquenched and now unquenchable is smoking and smouldering all round, has Louis XV lain down to die. With Pompadourism and Dubarryism, his Fleur-de-lis has been shamefully struck down in all lands and on all seas; Poverty invades even the Royal Exchequer, and Tax-farming can squeeze out no more; there is a quarrel of twenty-five years' standing with the Parlement; everywhere Want, Dishonesty, Unbelief, and hotbrained Sciologists for state-physicians: it is a portentous hour.

Such things can the eye of History see in this sick-room of King Louis, which were invisible to the Courtiers there. It is twenty years, gone Christmas-day, since Lord Chesterfield, summing up what he had noted of this same France, wrote, and sent off by post, the following words, that have become memorable: "In short, all the symptoms which I have ever met with in History, previous to great Changes and Revolutions in Government, now exist and daily increase in France."

CHAPTER III

VIATICUM ¹

FOR the present, however, the grand question with the Governors of France is: Shall extreme unction, or other ghostly viaticum (to Louis, not to France), be administered?

It is a deep question. For, if administered, if so much as spoken of, must not, on the very threshold of the business, Witch Dubarry vanish; hardly to return should Louis even recover? With her vanishes Duke d'Aiguillon and Company, and all their Armida-Palace, as was said; Chaos swallows the whole again, and there is left nothing but a smell of brimstone. But then, on the other hand, what will the Dauphinists and Choiseulists² say? Nay, what

¹ The sacrament of the eucharist, administered to the sick who are in danger of death.

² The last sacraments could not be administered so long as the king was living in sin with his mistress; she must first be definitely dismissed. Her dismissal meant the triumph of Choiseul and Marie Antoinette, both

may the royal martyr himself say, should he happen to get deadly-worse, without getting delirious? For the present, he still kisses the Dubarry hand; so we, from the anteroom, can note: but afterwards? Doctors' Bulletins may run as they are ordered, but it is "confluent small-pox," — of which, as is whispered too, the Gatekeeper's once so buxom Daughter lies ill: and Louis XV is not a man to be trifled with in his viaticum. Was he not wont to catechize his very girls in the *Parc-aux-cerfs*,¹ and pray with and for them, that they might preserve their — orthodoxy? A strange fact, not an unexampled one; for there is no animal so strange as man.

. . . The doors are well watched, no improper figure can enter. Indeed, few wish to enter; for the putrid infection reaches even to the *Œil de Bœuf*²; so that "more than fifty fall sick, and ten die." Mesdames the Princesses alone wait at the loathsome sick-bed; impelled by filial piety. The three Princesses, *Graille*, *Chiffe*, *Coche* (Rag, Snip, Pig, as he was wont to name them), are assiduous there; when all have fled. The fourth Princess, *Loque* (Dud), as we guess, is already in the Nunnery, and can only give her orisons. Poor *Graille* and Sisterhood, they have never known a Father; such is the hard bargain Grandeur must make. Scarcely at the *Débotter* (when Royalty took off its boots) could they snatch up their "enormous hoops, gird the long train round their waists, huddle on their black cloaks of taffeta up to the very chin;" and so, in fit appearance of full dress, "every evening at six," walk majestically in; receive their royal kiss on the brow; and then walk majestically out again, to embroidery, small-scandal, prayers, and vacancy. If Majesty came some morning, with coffee of its own making, and of whom were hostile to Du Barry. Naturally they were eager that the sacrament should be administered.

¹ A house at Versailles which served as shelter for the girls of low birth and poor education who were not openly recognized as mistresses by Louis XV.

² The ante-chamber of the royal apartment at Versailles was called the *Œil de Bœuf*, or "Bull's Eye," because of the large round window which lighted it.

swallowed it with them hastily while the dogs were uncoupling for the hunt, it was received as a grace of Heaven. Poor withered ancient women! in the wild tossings that yet await your fragile existence, before it be crushed and broken; as ye fly through hostile countries, over tempestuous seas, are almost taken by the Turks; and wholly, in the Sansculottic¹ Earthquake, know not your right hand from your left, be this always an assured place in your remembrance: for the act was good and loving! To us also it is a little sunny spot, in that dismal howling waste, where we hardly find another. . . .

CHAPTER IV

LOUIS THE UNFORGOTTEN

POOR Louis! With these it is a hollow phantasmagory, where like mimes they mope and mowl, and utter false sounds for hire; but with thee it is frightful earnest.

Frightful to all men is Death; from of old named King of Terrors. Our little compact home of an Existence, where we dwelt complaining, yet as in a home, is passing, in dark agonies, into an Unknown of Separation, Foreignness, unconditioned Possibility. The Heathen Emperor asks of his soul: Into what places art thou now departing? The Catholic King must answer: To the Judgement-bar of the Most High God! Yes, it is a summing up of Life; a final settling, and giving-in the "account of the deeds done in the body:" they are done now; and lie there unalterable, and do bear their fruits, long as Eternity shall last.

Louis XV had always the kingliest abhorrence of Death. Unlike the praying Duke of Orleans, *Egalité's*² grandfather, — for indeed several of them had a touch of madness, —

¹ *Supra*, p. 12, note 1.

² *Egalité*, or "Equality," was the name taken by Philippe, Duke of Orleans, cousin of the King, who sought to curry favor with the popular party during the Revolution; he was nevertheless guillotined in 1793. His grandfather, to whom reference is here made, was the son of the regent of France during the minority of Louis XV.

who honestly believed that there was no Death! He, if the Court Newsmen can be believed, started up once on a time, glowing with sulphurous contempt and indignation on his poor Secretary, who had stumbled on the words, *feu roi d'Espagne* (the late King of Spain): "*Feu roi, Monsieur?*" — "Monseigneur," hastily answered the trembling but adroit man of business, "*c'est une titre qu'ils prennent* ('tis a title they take)." Louis, we say, was not so happy; but he did what he could. He would not suffer Death to be spoken of; avoided the sight of churchyards, funereal monuments, and whatsoever could bring it to mind. It is the resource of the Ostrich; who, hard hunted, sticks his foolish head in the ground, and would fain forget that his foolish unseeing body is not unseen too. Or sometimes, with a spasmodic antagonism, significant of the same thing, and of more, he *would* go; or stopping his court carriages, would send into churchyards, and ask "how many new graves there were to-day," though it gave his poor Pompadour the disagreeablest qualms. We can figure the thought of Louis that day, when, all royally caparisoned for hunting, he met, at some sudden turning in the Wood of Senart, a ragged Peasant with a coffin: "For whom?" — It was for a poor brother slave, whom Majesty had sometimes noticed slaving in those quarters: "What did he die of?" — "Of hunger": — the King gave his steed the spur.

But figure his thought, when Death is now clutching at his own heart-strings; unlooked for, inexorable! Yes, poor Louis, Death has found thee. No palace walls or life-guards, gorgeous tapestries or gilt buckram of stiffest ceremonial could keep him out; but he is here, here at thy very life-breath, and will extinguish it. Thou, whose whole existence hitherto was a chimera and scenic show, at length becomest a reality: sumptuous Versailles burst asunder, like a Dream, into void Immensity; Time is done, and all the scaffolding of Time falls wrecked with hideous clangour round thy soul: the pale Kingdoms yawn open; there must thou enter, naked, all unking'd, and await what is appointed thee! Unhappy man, there as thou turnest, in dull agony,

on thy bed of weariness, what a thought is thine! Purgatory and Hellfire, now all too possible, in the prospect: in the retrospect, — alas, what thing didst thou do that were not better undone; what mortal didst thou generously help; what sorrow hadst thou mercy on? Do the “five hundred thousand” ghosts, who sank shamefully on so many battle-fields from Rossbach to Quebec, that thy Harlot might take revenge for an epigram,¹ — crowd round thee in this hour? Thy foul Harem; the curses of mothers, the tears and infamy of daughters? Miserable man! thou “hast done evil as thou couldst:” thy whole existence seems one hideous abortion and mistake of Nature; the use and meaning of thee not yet known. Wert thou a fabulous Griffin, *devouring* the works of men; daily dragging virgins to thy cave; — clad also in scales that no spear would pierce: no spear but Death’s? A Griffin not fabulous but real. Frightful, O Louis, seem these moments for thee. — We will pry no further into the horrors of a sinner’s deathbed.

And yet let no meanest man lay flattering unction to his soul. Louis was a Ruler; but art not thou also one? His wide France, look at it from the Fixed Stars (themselves not yet Infinitude), is no wider than thy narrow brickfield, where thou too didst faithfully, or didst unfaithfully. Man, “Symbol of Eternity imprisoned into Time!” it is not thy works, which are all mortal, infinitely little, and the greatest no greater than the least, but only the Spirit thou workest in, that can have worth or continuance.

But reflect, in any case, what a life-problem this of poor Louis, when he rose as *Bien-Aimé* from that Metz sick-bed, really was! What son of Adam could have swayed such

¹ Madame Pompadour exercised her powerful influence to bring on the Seven Years’ War, in which these battles were fought. It was said that one cause of her animosity against Frederick of Prussia, France’s opponent, was that he had bestowed upon her the epithet “Cotillon II,” in allusion to her having succeeded “Cotillon I”, that is, Madame de Chateauroux. “Cotillon” was the familiar and not too elegant term for a royal mistress.

incoherences into coherence? Could he? Blindest Fortune alone has cast *him* on the top of it: he swims there; can as little sway it as the drift-log sways the wind-tossed moon-stirred Atlantic. "What have I done to be so loved?" he said then. He may say now: What have I done to be so hated? Thou hast done nothing, poor Louis! Thy fault is properly even this, that thou didst *nothing*. What could poor Louis do? Abdicate, and wash his hands of it, — in favour of the first that would accept! Other clear wisdom there was none for him. As it was, he stood gazing dubiously, the absurdest mortal extant (a very Solecism Incarnate) into the absurdest confused world; — wherein at last nothing seemed so certain as this, That he, the incarnate Solecism, had five senses; that there were Flying Tables¹ (*Tables Volantes*, which vanish through the floor, to come back reloaded), and a *Parc-aux-cerfs*.

Whereby at least we have again this historical curiosity: a human being in an original position; swimming passively, as on some boundless "Mother of Dead Dogs," towards issues which he partly saw. For Louis had withal a kind of insight in him. So when a new Minister of Marine, or what else it might be, came announcing his new era, the Scarlet-woman would hear from the lips of Majesty at supper: "Yes, he spread out his ware like another; promised the beautifullest things in the world, not a thing of which will come: he does not know this region; he will see." Or again: "'Tis the twentieth time I have heard all that; France will never get a Navy, I believe." How touching also was this: "If *I* were Lieutenant of Police, I would prohibit those Paris cabriolets."²

¹ Referring to the fantastic luxury of Louis' banquets, which were enlivened by devices of this kind.

² The streets of Paris were narrow and there were no sidewalks, so that the poor on foot were constantly being run down by the coaches of the rich; it was said that one hundred persons were thus killed every year. The general attitude of the upper classes was that the poor had no rights. Louis XV considered it beneath his dignity and grandeur to put a stop to such a state of affairs. (Mercier, *Tableaux de Paris*, I, chap. xx.)

Doomed mortal; — for is it not a doom to be Solecism incarnate! A new *Roi Fainéant*, King Donothing; but with the strangest new *Mayor of the Palace*: no bow-legged Pepin now for *Mayor*, but that same cloud-capt, fire-breathing Spectre of DEMOCRACY; incalculable, which is enveloping the world! — Was Louis, then, no wickeder than this or the other private Donothing and Eatall; such as we often enough see, under the name of Man of Pleasure, cumbering God's diligent Creation, for a time? Say, wretcheder! His Life-solecism was seen and felt of a whole scandalized, world; him endless Oblivion cannot engulf, and swallow to endless depths, — not yet for a generation or two.

However, be this as it will, we remark, not without interest, that “on the evening of the 4th,” Dame Dubarry issues from the sick-room, with perceptible “trouble in her visage.” It is the fourth evening of May, year of Grace 1774. Such a whispering in the *Œil-de-Bœuf*! Is he dying then? What can be said, is that Dubarry seems making up her packages; she sails weeping through her gilt boudoirs, as if taking leave. D'Aiguillon and Company are near their last card; nevertheless they will not yet throw up the game. But as for the sacramental controversy, it is as good as settled without being mentioned; Louis sends for his Abbé Moudon in the course of next night; is confessed by him, some say for the space of “seventeen minutes,” and demands the sacraments of his own accord.

Nay already, in the afternoon, behold is not this your Sorceress Dubarry with the handkerchief at her eyes, mounting D'Aiguillon's chariot; rolling off in his Duchess's consolatory arms? She is gone: and her place knows her no more. Vanish, false Sorceress; into Space! Needless to hover at neighbouring Ruel; for thy day is done. Shut are the royal palace-gates for evermore; hardly in coming years shalt thou, under cloud of night, descend once, in black domino, like a black night-bird, and disturb the fair Antoinette's music-party in the Park; all Birds of Paradise flying from thee, and musical windpipes growing mute. Thou unclean, yet unmalignant, not unpitiable

thing! What a course was thine: from that first truckle-bed (in Joan of Arc's country) where thy mother bore thee, with tears, to an unnamed father; forward, through lowest subterranean depths, and over highest sunlit heights, of Harlotdom and Rascaldom — to the guillotine-axe, which sheers away thy vainly whimpering head! Rest there uncursed; only buried and abolished; what else befitted thee?

Louis, meanwhile, is in considerable impatience for his sacraments; sends more than once to the window, to see whether they are not coming. Be of comfort, Louis, what comfort thou canst: they are under way, these sacraments. Towards six in the morning, they arrive. Cardinal Grand-Almoner Roche-Aymon is here in pontificals, with his pyxes and his tools: he approaches the royal pillow; elevates his wafer; mutters or seems to mutter somewhat; — and so (as the Abbé Georgel, in words that stick to one, expresses it) has Louis “made the *amende honorable* to God;” so does your Jesuit construe it. — “*Wa, Wa,*” as the wild Clotaire groaned out, when life was departing, “what great God is this that pulls down the strength of the strongest kings!”

The *amende honorable*, what “legal apology” you will, to God: — but not, if D’Aiguillon can help it, to man. Dubarry still hovers in his mansion at Ruel; and while there is life, there is hope. Grand-Almoner Roche-Aymon, accordingly (for he seems to be in the secret), has no sooner seen his pyxes and gear repacked, than he is stepping majestically forth again, as if the work were done! But King’s Confessor Abbé Moudon starts forward; with anxious acidulent face, twitches him by the sleeve; whispers in his ear. Whereupon the poor Cardinal has to turn round; and declare audibly, “that his Majesty repents of any subjects of scandal he may have given (*a pu donner*); and purposes, by the strength of Heaven assisting him, to avoid the like — for the future!” Words listened to by Richelieu with mastiff-face, growing blacker; and answered to, aloud, “with an epithet,” — which Besenval will not repeat. Old Riche-

lieu,¹ conqueror of Minorca, companion of Flying-Table orgies, perforator of bed-room walls, is thy day also done?

Alas, the Chapel organs may keep going; the Shrine of Sainte Genevieve be let down,² and pulled up again, — without effect. In the evening the whole Court, with Dauphin and Dauphiness,³ assist at the Chapel: priests are hoarse with chanting their "Prayers of Forty Hours;" and the heaving bellows blow. Almost frightful! For the very heaven blackens; battering rain-torrents dash, with thunder; almost drowning the organ's voice: and electric fire-flashes make the very flambeaux on the altar pale. So that the most, as we are told, retired, when it was over, with hurried steps "in a state of meditation (*recueillement*)," and said little or nothing.

So it has lasted for the better half of a fortnight; the Dubarry gone almost a week. Besenval says, all the world was getting impatient *que cela finît*; that poor Louis would have done with it. It is now the 10th of May, 1774. He will soon have done now.

This tenth May day falls into the loathsome sick-bed; but dull, unnoticed there: for they that look out of the windows are quite darkened; the cistern-wheel moves discordant on its axis; Life, like a spent steed, is panting towards the goal. In their remote apartments, Dauphin and Dauphiness stand road-ready; all grooms and equerries booted and spurred: waiting for some signal to escape the house of

¹ The duc de Richelieu (1696-1788), grand-nephew of the famous cardinal, was a successful diplomat and general. Witty and brave, but totally lacking in moral sense, as in convictions, he typifies the good and evil characteristics of his century.

² Sainte Genevieve (circ. 420-512) was the patron saint of Paris, and was said to have assisted in the conversion of the Frankish king, Clovis. The shrine in which her relics were preserved — at this time in the new church built by Louis XV — was visited and adored by pilgrims of all ranks. The shrine was opened when the special intercession of the saint was desired for the mortally sick.

³ Louis' grandson, later Louis XVI, and his wife, Marie Antoinette, daughter of the Empress Maria Theresa. Dauphin was the title given to the heir-apparent.

pestilence.* And, hark! across the Œil-de-Bœuf, what sound is that; sound "terrible and absolutely like thunder?" It is the rush of the whole Court, rushing as in wager, to salute the new Sovereigns: Hail to your Majesties! The Dauphin and Dauphiness are King and Queen! Overpowered with many emotions, they two fall on their knees together, and, with streaming tears, exclaim: "O God, guide us, protect us; we are too young to reign!" — Too young indeed.

But thus, in any case, "with a sound absolutely like thunder," has the Horologe of Time struck, and an old Era passed away. The Louis that was, lies forsaken, a mass of abhorred clay; abandoned "to some poor persons, and priests of the *Chapelle Ardente*," — who make haste to put him "in two lead coffins, pouring in abundant spirits of wine." The new Louis with his Court is rolling towards Choisy, through the summer afternoon: the royal tears still flow; but a word mispronounced by Monseigneur d'Artois sets them all laughing, and they weep no more. Light mortals, how ye walk your light life-minuet, over bottomless abysses, divided from you by a film!

For the rest, the proper authorities felt that no Funeral could be too unceremonious. Besenval himself thinks it was unceremonious enough. Two carriages containing two noblemen of the usher species, and a Versailles clerical person; some score of mounted pages, some fifty palfreniers:

* One grudges to interfere with the beautiful theatrical "candle,"¹ which Madame Campan (i. 79) has lit on this occasion, and blown out at the moment of death. What candles might be lit or blown out, in so large an Establishment as that of Versailles, no man at such distance would like to affirm: at the same time, as it was two o'clock in a May Afternoon, and these royal Stables must have been some five or six hundred yards from the royal sick-room, the "candle" does threaten to go out in spite of us. It remains burning indeed — in her fantasy; throwing light on much in those *Mémoires* of hers. [Carlyle.]

¹ Madame Campan, lady-in-waiting to Marie Antoinette, relates that the Dauphin decided to depart the moment that the king breathed his last. But decency forbade that positive orders for departure should be passed from mouth to mouth. A lighted taper was accordingly placed in a window at the palace; when the head of the stables saw it extinguished, as signal of the king's death, he ordered the pages and equerries to mount, and all was ready for setting off. [Editor.]

these, with torches, but not so much as in black, start from Versailles on the second evening, with their leaden bier. At a high trot, they start; and keep up that pace. For the jibes (*brocards*) of those Parisians, who stand planted in two rows, all the way to St. Denis,¹ and "give vent to their pleasantry, the characteristic of the nation," do not tempt one to slacken. Towards midnight the vaults of St. Denis receive their own: unwept by any eye of all these; if not by poor *Loque* his neglected Daughter's whose Nunnery is hard by.

Him they crush down, and huddle under-ground, in this impatient way; him and his era of sin and tyranny and shame: for behold a New Era is come; the future all the brighter that the past was base.

¹ The kings of France were buried in the Abbey of St. Denis, a few miles to the north of Paris.

[The accession of the young king, Louis XVI, in 1774, changed the administration of France for the better, but did not alter the conditions making for revolution. The misery of the peasants continued; upon them fell the brunt of the taxation from which the noblesse and clergy were exempt. The middle class were discontented and jealous of the social prestige of the nobility, who did nothing to justify their preëminent position. The extravagance of the court and the scandals of its life brought discredit upon the name of royalty.]

More important, however, was the spread of philosophy which demonstrated the futility and expense of the existing fabric of society. The feudal system, the Church, and the absolute monarchy were undermined by the arguments of reason and were held up as outworn remnants of an age that was past. Following this critical philosophy came the constructive theories of Rousseau, which opened up the possibility of a new and better social structure, based upon the sovereignty of the people. And at the same time the American Revolution furnished a practical example of the success of his doctrines.

But the one steady fact of supreme significance, as Carlyle said, was the continued deficit of revenue. France was on the verge of bankruptcy and the mechanism of government threatened to run down. Reforming ministers vainly attempted to fill up the financial deficit. The curtailment of expenditure aroused discontent at Court; the floating of loans was nothing but "quenching fire by oil thrown on it;" attempts to force the noblesse and clergy to pay taxes were balked by the opposition of those classes.

Finally in 1788, as a last resource, the king decided to call the States-General. This body, representative of the three estates, clergy, noblesse, and bourgeois, was now believed to be the sole remaining means for the raising of supplies. In January, 1789, elections were held and France looked forward to a settlement of her difficulties. On May 4th the Deputies assembled at Versailles.]

BOOK IV

STATES-GENERAL

CHAPTER IV

THE PROCESSION

ON the first Saturday of May, it is gala at Versailles; and Monday, fourth of the month, is to be a still greater day. The Deputies have mostly got thither, and sought out lodgings; and are now successively, in long well-ushered files, kissing the hand of Majesty in the Château. Supreme Usher de Brézé does not give the highest satisfaction: we cannot but observe that in ushering Noblesse or Clergy into the Anointed Presence, he liberally opens *both* his folding-doors; and on the other hand, for members of the Third Estate, opens only one! However, there is room to enter; Majesty has smiles for all.

The good Louis welcomes his Honourable Members, with smiles of hope. He has prepared for them the Hall of *Menus*, the largest near him; and often surveyed the workmen as they went on. A spacious Hall: with raised platform for Throne, Court and Blood-royal; space for six hundred Commons Deputies in front; for half as many Clergy on this hand, and half as many Noblesse on that. It has lofty galleries; wherefrom dames of honour, splendid in *gaze d'or*; foreign Diplomacies, and other gilt-edged white-frilled individuals, to the number of two thousand, — may sit and look. Broad passages flow through it; and outside the inner wall, all round it. There are committee-rooms, guard-rooms, robing-rooms: really a noble Hall; where upholstery, aided by the subject fine-arts, has done

its best; and crimson tasselled cloths, and emblematic *fleurs-de-lys* are not wanting.

The Hall is ready: the very costume, as we said, has been settled; and the Commons are *not* to wear that hated slouch-hat (*chapeau clabaud*), but one not quite so slouched (*chapeau rabattu*). As for their manner of *working*, when all dressed; for their "voting by head or by order" and the rest, — this, which it were perhaps still time to settle, and in few hours will be no longer time, remains unsettled; hangs dubious in the breast of Twelve Hundred men.

But now finally the Sun, on Monday the 4th of May, has risen; — unconcerned, as if it were no special day. And yet, as his first rays could strike music from the Memnon's Statue on the Nile, what tones were these, so thrilling, tremulous, of preparation and foreboding, which he awoke in every bosom at Versailles! Huge Paris, in all conceivable and inconceivable vehicles, is pouring itself forth; from each Town and Village come subsidiary rills: Versailles is a very sea of men. But above all, from the Church of St. Louis to the Church of Notre-Dame: one vast suspended-billow of Life, — with *spray* scattered even to the chimney-tops! For on chimney-tops too, as over the roofs, and up thitherwards on every lamp-iron, signpost, breakneck coign of vantage, sits patriotic Courage; and every window bursts with patriotic Beauty: for the Deputies are gathering at St. Louis Church; to march in procession to Notre-Dame, and hear sermon.

Yes, friends, ye may sit and look; bodily or in thought, all France, and all Europe, may sit and look; for it is a day like few others. Oh, one might weep like Xerxes: — So many serried rows sit perched there; like winged creatures, alighted out of Heaven: all these, and so many more that follow them, shall have wholly fled aloft again, vanishing into the blue Deep; and the memory of this day still be fresh. It is the baptism day of Democracy; sick Time has given it birth, the numbered months being run. The extreme-unction day of Feudalism! A superannuated System

of Society, decrepit with toils (for has it not done much; produced *you*, and what ye have and know!) — and with thefts and brawls, named glorious-victories; and with profligacies, sensualities, and on the whole with dotage and senility, — is now to die: and so, with death-throes and birth-throes, a new one is to be born. What a work, O Earth and Heavens, what a work! Battles and bloodshed, September Massacres, Bridges of Lodi, retreats of Moscow, Waterloos, Peterloos, Tenpound Franchises, Tarbarrels and Guillotines; ¹ — and from this present date, if one might prophesy, some two centuries of it still to fight! Two centuries; hardly less; before Democracy go through its due, most baleful, stages of *Quackocracy*; and a pestilential World be burnt up, and have begun to grow green and young again.

Rejoice nevertheless, ye Versailles multitudes; to you, from whom all this is hid, the glorious end of it is visible. This day, sentence of death is pronounced on Shams; judgement of resuscitation, were it but afar off, is pronounced on Realities. This day, it is declared aloud, as with a Doom-trumpet, that *a Lie is unbelievable*. Believe that, stand by that, if more there be not; and let what thing or things soever will follow it follow. “Ye can no other; God be your help!” So spake a greater than any of you; opening *his* Chapter of World-History.

Behold, however! The doors of St. Louis Church flung wide; and the Procession of Processions advancing towards Notre-Dame! Shouts rend the air; one shout, at which Grecian birds might drop dead. It is indeed a stately, solemn sight. The Elected of France, and then the Court of France; they are marshalled and march there, all in pre-

¹ Notable events and characteristics of the approaching era of transition. September Massacres (see p. 183) mark the rising of the Paris mob against aristocracy. Lodi, Moscow, and Waterloo were steps in the rise and fall of Napoleon. Peterloo was the place where the lower classes in England were put down in their attempt to win the right to vote. The tenpound franchise was the suffrage qualification enacted in England in 1832.

scribed place and costume. Our Commons "in plain black mantle and white cravat;" Noblesse, in gold-worked, brightly-dyed cloaks of velvet, resplendent, rustling with laces, waving with plumes; the Clergy in rochet, alb, or other best *pontificalibus*: lastly comes the King himself, and King's Household, also in their brightest blaze of pomp, — their brightest and final one. Some Fourteen Hundred Men blown together from all winds, on the deepest errand.

Yes, in that silent marching mass there lies Futurity enough. No symbolic Ark, like the old Hebrews, do these men bear: yet with them too is a Covenant; they too pre-side at a new Era in the History of Men. The whole Future is there, and Destiny dim-brooding over it; in the hearts and unshaped thoughts of these men, it lies illegible, inevitable. Singular to think: *they* have it in them; yet not they, not mortal, only the Eye above can read it, — as it shall unfold itself, in fire and thunder, of siege, and field artillery; in the rustling of battle-banners, the tramp of hosts, in the glow of burning cities, the shriek of strangled nations! Such things lie hidden, safe-wrapt in this Fourth day of May; — say rather, had lain in some other unknown day, of which this latter is the public fruit and outcome. As indeed what wonders lie in every Day, — had we the sight, as happily we have not, to decipher it: for is not every meanest Day "the conflux of two Eternities!"

Meanwhile, suppose we too, good Reader, should, as now without miracle Muse Clio enables us, — take *our* station also on some coign of vantage; and glance momentarily over this Procession, and this Life-sea; with far other eyes than the rest do, — namely with prophetic? We can mount, and stand there, without fear of falling.

As for the Life-sea, or onlooking unnumbered Multitude, it is fortunately all-too dim. Yet as we gaze fixedly, do not nameless Figures not a few, which shall not always be nameless, disclose themselves; visible or presumable there! . . .

Surely also, in some place not of honour, stands or sprawls up querulous, that he too, though short, may see, — one squalidest bleared mortal, redolent of soot and horse-drugs:

Jean Paul Marat of Neuchâtel!¹ O Marat, Renovator of Human Science, Lecturer on Optics; O thou remarkablest Horseleech, once in D'Artois' Stables, — as thy bleared soul looks forth, through thy bleared, dull-acrid, woe-stricken face, what sees it in all this? Any faintest light of hope; like dayspring after Nova-Zembla night? Or is it but *blue* sulphur-light, and spectres; woe, suspicion, revenge without end?

Of Draper Lecointre, how he shut his cloth-shop hard by, and stepped forth, one need hardly speak. Nor of Santerre, the sonorous Brewer from the Faubourg St. Antoine.² Two other Figures, and only two, we signalize there. The huge, brawny Figure; through whose black brows, and rude flattened face (*figure écrasée*), there looks a waste energy as of Hercules not yet furibund, — he is an esurient, unprovided Advocate; Danton by name: him mark.³ Then that other, his slight-built comrade, and craft-brother; he with the long curling locks; with the face of dingy blackguardism, wondrously irradiated with genius, as if a naphtha-lamp

¹ Jean Paul Marat (born in 1743, assassinated in 1793), one of the most influential leaders of the extreme popular party in the coming revolution, was a man of scientific attainments but unbalanced mentality. Taking up the pen of a journalist, he became a noted interpreter of democratic ideas; and, animated by fanatical pity for the misery of the masses, he sought a remedy in the destruction of their oppressors. It was his demand for the blood of aristocrats and moderates, and his share in the worst horrors of the revolution, that led to his assassination by Charlotte Corday (see p. 201).

² Santerre (1752-1809), a leader of the Paris mob and later general of the National Guard (see p. 99). The Faubourg St. Antoine was the labourers' quarter.

³ Georges-Jacques Danton (1759-1794), coming from a provincial town, was entering upon a successful career at the outbreak of the Revolution. He represented the democratic aspirations of the lower middle class, but his real title to greatness lies in the energy and skill displayed at the moment when France was threatened by foreign invaders. Largely responsible for the deposition and execution of Louis, which he regarded as a measure of public safety, he advocated the relaxation of the Reign of Terror after the defeat of the foreign and domestic enemies of the Revolution. Using this as an excuse, Robespierre, his rival, was able to bring him to the guillotine. (See p. 221).

burnt within it: that Figure is Camille Desmoulins.¹ A fellow of infinite shrewdness, wit, nay humour; one of the sprightliest clearest souls in all these millions. Thou poor Camille, say of thee what they may, it were but falsehood to pretend one did not almost love thee, thou headlong lightly sparkling man! But the brawny, not yet furibund Figure, we say, is Jacques Danton; a name that shall be "tolerably known in the Revolution."² He is President of the electoral Cordeliers District at Paris, or about to be it; and shall open his lungs of brass.

We dwell no longer on the mixed shouting Multitude: for now, behold, the Commons Deputies are at hand!

Which of these Six Hundred individuals, in plain white cravat, that have come up to regenerate France, might one guess would become their *king*? For a king or leader they, as all bodies of men, must have: be their work what it may, there is one man there who, by character, faculty, position, is fittest of all to do it; that man, as future not yet elected king, walks there among the rest. He with the thick black locks, will it be? With the *hure*, as himself calls it, or black *boar's-head*, fit to be "shaken" as a senatorial portent? Through whose shaggy beetle-brows, and rough-hewn, seamed, carbuncled face, there look natural ugliness, small-pox, incontinence, bankruptcy, — and burning fire of genius; like comet-fire glaring fuliginous through murkiest confusions? It is *Gabriel Honoré Riquetti de Mirabeau*, the world-compeller; man-ruling Deputy of Aix! According to the Baroness de Staël, he steps proudly along, though looked at askance here; and shakes his black *chevelure*, or lion's-mane; as if prophetic of great deeds.

¹ Camille Desmoulins (1760-1794) was the most brilliant journalist of the Revolution, and by his pamphlets contributed largely to the dissemination of popular opinions. In general a poor orator, he is noted for the rousing of the people to their attack on the Bastille in July, 1789. He shared the ideas of Danton, and it was because he demanded a relaxation of the Reign of Terror in his journal that Robespierre turned against him. Desmoulins was included in the judgment pronounced against Danton and died on the scaffold with him. (See p. 221).

² It was in these words that Danton described himself when on trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal.

Yes, Reader, that is the Type-Frenchman of this epoch; as Voltaire ¹ was of the last. He is French in his aspirations, acquisitions, in his virtues, in his vices; perhaps more French than any other man; — and intrinsically such a mass of manhood too. Mark him well. The National Assembly were all different without that one; nay, he might say with the old Despot: “The National Assembly? I am that.”

Of a southern climate, of wild southern blood: for the Riquettis, or Arrighettis, had to fly from Florence and the Guelfs, long centuries ago, and settled in Provence; where from generation to generation they have ever approved themselves a peculiar kindred: irascible, indomitable, sharp-cutting, true, like the steel they wore; of an intensity and activity that sometimes verged towards madness, yet did not reach it. One ancient Riquetti, in mad fulfilment of a mad vow, chains two Mountains together; and the chain, with its “iron star of five rays,” is still to be seen. May not a modern Riquetti *unchain* so much, and set it drifting, — which also shall be seen?

Destiny has work for that swart burly-headed Mirabeau; Destiny has watched over him, prepared him from afar. Did not his Grandfather, stout *Col-d'Argent* (Silver-Stock, so they named him), shattered and slashed by seven-and-twenty wounds in one fell day, lie sunk together on the Bridge at Casano; while Prince Eugene's cavalry galloped and regalloped over him, — only the flying sergeant had thrown a camp-kettle over that loved head; and Vendôme, dropping his spyglass, moaned out, “Mirabeau is *dead*, then!” Nevertheless he was not dead: he awoke to breath, and miraculous surgery; — for Gabriel was yet to be. With his *silver stock* he kept his scarred head erect, through long years; and wedded; and produced tough Marquis Victor,

¹ François-Marie Voltaire (1694-1778) was the most noted of the 18th century philosophers. A poet, historian, and scientist, his influence upon the ideas of his time is incalculable. His destructive criticism, launched against the worn-out institutions of society and especially against the Roman Church, did more than anything else to awaken the people of intelligence to the necessity of change.

the *Friend of Men*. Whereby at last in the appointed year 1749, this long-expected rough-hewn Gabriel Honoré did likewise see the light: roughest lion's whelp ever littered of that rough breed. How the old lion (for our old Marquis too was lionlike, most unconquerable, kindly-genial, most perverse) gazed wondering on his offspring; and determined to train him as no lion had yet been! It is in vain, O Marquis! This cub, though thou slay him and flay him, will not learn to draw in dogcart of Political Economy, and be a *Friend of Men*; he will not be Thou, but must and will be Himself, another than Thou. Divorce lawsuits, "whole family save one in prison, and three-score *Lettres-de-Cachet*"¹ for thy own sole use, do but astonish the world.

Our luckless Gabriel, sinned against and sinning, has been in the Isle of Rhé, and heard the Atlantic from his tower; in the Castle of If, and heard the Mediterranean at Marseilles. He has been in the Fortress of Joux; and forty-two months, with hardly clothing to his back, in the Dungeon of Vincennes; — all by *Lettre-de-Cachet*, from his lion father. He has been in Pontarlier Jails (self-constituted prisoner); was noticed fording estuaries of the sea (at low water), in flight from the face of men. He has pleaded before Aix Parlements (to get back his wife); the public gathering on roofs, to see since they could not hear: "the clatter teeth (*claque-dents*)!" snarls singular old Mirabeau; discerning in such admired forensic eloquence nothing but two chattering jaw-bones, and a head vacant, sonorous, of the drum species.

But as for Gabriel Honoré, in these strange wayfarings, what has he not seen and tried! From drill-sergeants, to prime ministers, to foreign and domestic booksellers, all manner of men he has seen. All manner of men he has gained; for at bottom it is a social, loving heart, that wild unconquerable one: — more especially all manner of women. From the Archer's Daughter at Saintes to that fair young Sophie Madame Monnier, whom he could not but "steal,"

¹ *Lettres-de-Cachet*: orders signed by the king which authorized the summary arrest and imprisonment of the person named. No trial was allowed and the term of secret detention which followed was often long.

and be beheaded for — in effigy! For indeed hardly since the Arabian Prophet lay dead to Ali's admiration, was there seen such a Love-hero, with the strength of thirty men. In War, again, he has helped to conquer Corsica; fought duels, irregular brawls; horsewhipped calumnious barons. In Literature, he has written on *Despotism*, on *Lettres-de-Cachet*; Erotics Sapphic-Wertereian,¹ Obscenities, Profanities; Books on the *Prussian Monarchy*, on *Cagliostro*,² on *Calonne*,³ on the *Water Companies of Paris*, — each Book comparable: we will say, to a bituminous alarum-fire; huge, smoky, sudden! The firepan, the kindling, the bitumen were his own; but the lumber, of rags, old wood and nameless combustible rubbish (for all is fuel to him), was gathered from hucksters, and ass-paniers, of every description under heaven. Whereby, indeed, hucksters enough have been heard to exclaim: Out upon it, the fire is *mine*!

Nay, consider it more generally, seldom had man such a talent for borrowing. The idea, the faculty of another man he can make his; the man himself he can make his. "All reflex and echo (*tout de reflet et de réverbère*)!" snarls old Mirabeau, who can see, but will not. Crabbed old Friend of Men! it is his sociality, his aggregative nature; and will now be the quality of qualities for him. In that forty years' "struggle against despotism," he has gained the glorious faculty of *self-help*, and yet not lost the glorious natural gift of *fellowship*, of being helped. Rare union: this man can live self-sufficing — yet lives also in the life of other men; can make men love him, work with him; a born king of men!

But consider further how, as the old Marquis still snarls, he

¹ Erotics Sapphic-Wertereian: love poetry of a passionate and sentimental nature. Sappho, the great lyric poetess of Greece (600 B.C.); Werther, see p. 6, note 2.

² Cagliostro (1743-1795) was an Italian adventurer and quack-doctor who came to Paris in 1785. For a time he was much in vogue with fashionable society because of his pretended knowledge of the occult.

³ Calonne (1734-1802) was Minister of Finances from 1785 to 1787. His rather fantastic plan of reform was opposed by the nobles and he resigned, discredited and financially ruined.

has "made away with (*humé*, swallowed) all *Formulas*"; — a fact which, if we meditate it, will in these days mean much. This is no man of system, then; he is only a man of instincts and insights. A man nevertheless who will glare fiercely on any object; and see through it, and conquer it: for he has intellect, he has will, force beyond other men. A man not with *logic-spectacles*; but with an *eye*! Unhappily without Decalogue, moral Code or Theorem of any fixed sort; yet not without a strong living Soul in him, and Sincerity there: a Reality, not an Artificiality, not a Sham! And so he, having struggled "forty years against despotism," and "made away with all formulas," shall now become the spokesman of a Nation bent to do the same. For is it not precisely the struggle of France also to cast off despotism; to make away with *her* old formulas, — having found them naught, worn out, far from the reality? She will make away with *such* formulas; — and even go *bare*, if need be, till she have found new ones.

Toward such work, in such manner, marches he, this singular Riquetti Mirabeau. In fiery rough figure, with black Samson-locks under the slouch-hat, he steps along there. A fiery fuliginous mass, which could not be choked and smothered, but would fill all France with smoke. And now it has got *air*; it will burn its whole substance, its whole smoke-atmosphere too, and fill all France with flame. Strange lot! Forty years of that smouldering, with foul fire-damp and vapour enough; then victory over that; — and like a burning mountain he blazes heaven-high; and for twenty-three resplendent months, pours out, in flame and molten fire-torrents, all that is in him, the Pharos and Wondersign of an amazed Europe; — and then lies hollow, cold for ever! Pass on, thou questionable Gabriel Honoré, the greatest of them all: in the whole National Deputies, in the whole Nation, there is none like and none second to thee.

But now if Mirabeau is the greatest, who of these Six Hundred may be the meanest? Shall we say, that anxious, slight, ineffectual-looking man, under thirty, in spectacles;

his eyes (were the glasses off) troubled, careful; with upturned face, snuffing dimly the uncertain future times; complexion of a multiplex atrabiliar colour, the final shade of which may be the pale sea-green. That greenish-coloured (*verdâtre*) individual is an Advocate of Arras; his name is *Maximilien Robespierre*.¹ The son of an Advocate; his father founded mason-lodges under Charles Edward, the English Prince or Pretender. Maximilien the first-born was thriftily educated; he had brisk Camille Desmoulins for school-mate in the College of Louis le Grand, at Paris. But he begged our famed Necklace-Cardinal, Rohan, the patron, to let him depart thence, and resign in favour of a younger brother. The strict-minded Max departed; home to paternal Arras; and even had a Law-case there and pleaded, not unsuccessfully, "in favour of the first Franklin thunder-rod." With a strict painful mind, an understanding small but clear and ready, he grew in favour with official persons, who could foresee in him an excellent man of business, happily quite free from genius. The Bishop, therefore, taking counsel, appoints him Judge of his diocese; and he faithfully does justice to the people: till behold, one day, a culprit comes whose crime merits hanging; and the strict-minded Max must abdicate, for his conscience will not permit the dooming of any son of Adam to die. A strict-minded, strait-laced man! A man unfit for Revolutions? Whose small soul, transparent wholesome-looking as small-ale, could by no chance ferment into virulent *alegar*, — the mother of ever new *alegar*; till all France were grown acetous virulent? We shall see. . . .

And worthy *Doctor Guillotin*, whom we hoped to behold

¹ Robespierre (1759-1794) played a minor rôle in the early years of the Revolution. By extreme caution and by his skill in acquiring a reputation for unswerving virtue and sincere interest in the welfare of the people, he gradually increased his influence in Paris and later in the National Convention. Largely responsible for the organization of the System of Terror, he was supreme during the months which succeeded the death of Danton. For a time his popularity far transcended that of any other man of the Revolution; but in July, 1794, he was destroyed by a coalition of political enemies who feared for their own lives. (See p. 225).

one other time? If not here, the Doctor should be here, and we see him with the eye of prophecy: for indeed the Parisian Deputies are all a little late. Singular Guillotin, respectable practitioner; doomed by a satiric destiny to the strangest immortal glory that ever kept obscure mortal from his resting-place, the bosom of oblivion! Guillotin can improve the ventilation of the Hall; in all cases of medical police and *hygiène* be a present aid: but, greater far, he can produce his "Report on the Penal Code;" and reveal therein a cunningly devised Beheading Machine, which shall become famous and world-famous. This is the product of Guillotin's endeavours, gained not without meditation and reading; which product popular gratitude or levity christens by a feminine derivative name, as if it were his daughter: *La Guillotine!* "With my machine, Messieurs, I whisk off your head (*vous fais sauter le tête*) in a twinkling, and you have no pain;" — whereat they all laugh. Unfortunate Doctor! For two-and-twenty years he, unguillotined, shall hear nothing but guillotine, see nothing but guillotine; then dying, shall through long centuries wander, as it were, a disconsolate ghost, on the wrong side of Styx and Lethe; his name like to outlive Caesar's. . . .

Thus, however, amid skyrending *vivats*, and blessings from every heart, has the Procession of the Commons Deputies rolled by.

Next follow the Noblesse, and next the Clergy; concerning both of whom it might be asked, What they specially have come for? Specially, little as they dream of it, to answer this question, put in a voice of thunder: What are you doing in God's fair Earth and Task-garden; where whosoever is not working is begging or stealing? Wo, wo to themselves and to all, if they can only answer: Collecting tithes, Preserving game! — Remark, meanwhile, how *D'Orléans*¹ affects to step before his own Order, and mingle with the Commons.

¹ The duc d'Orleans sought to flatter the mob, already hoping, perhaps, that he might be chosen king if Louis were forced to abdicate. His subsequent intrigues for the crown were disgraceful and ultimately proved disastrous to himself.

For him are *vivats*: few for the rest, though all wave in plumed "hats of a feudal cut," and have sword on thigh; though among them is *D'Antraigues*, the young Languedocian gentleman, — and indeed many a Peer more or less noteworthy.

There are *Liancourt*, and *La Rochefoucault*; the liberal Anglomaniac Dukes. There is a filially pious *Lally*; a couple of liberal *Lameths*. Above all, there is a *Lafayette*; ¹ whose name shall be Cromwell-Grandison,² and fill the world. Many a "formula" has this Lafayette too made away with; yet not *all* formulas. He sticks by the Washington-formula; and by that he will stick; — and hang by it, as by sure bower-anchor hangs and swings the tight war-ship, which, after all changes of wildest weather and water, is found still hanging. Happy for him; be it glorious or not! Alone of all Frenchmen he has a theory of the world, and right mind to conform thereto; he can become a hero and perfect character, were it but the hero of one idea. . . .

King Louis with his Court brings up the rear: he cheerful, in this day of hope, is saluted with plaudits; still more *Necker* his Minister. Not so the Queen; on whom hope shines not steadily any more. Ill-fated Queen! Her hair is already grey with many cares and crosses; her firstborn son is dying in these weeks: black falsehood has ineffaceably soiled her name; ineffaceably while this generation lasts. Instead of *Vive la Reine*, voices insult her with *Vive d'Orléans*.³ Of her queenly beauty little remains except its

¹ Marie Joseph Lafayette (1757-1834) was the most distinguished of the younger French noblesse who sympathized with the cause of liberty in the New World and actively assisted the American revolutionaries. He occupied a position of importance during the early days of the French Revolution, but was forced into exile by the triumph of the extremists. He returned to France after the fall of Napoleon and was an important factor in the liberal Revolution of 1830.

² Cromwell-Grandison: Oliver Cromwell and Sir Charles Grandison in one. *Sir Charles Grandison*, a novel by Samuel Richardson written in 1753; the hero is a combination of all the virtues and graces.

³ Because of the bitter enmity between the Queen and Orleans, a cheer for the latter would be an insult to Marie Antoinette.

stateliness; not now gracious, but haughty, rigid, silently enduring. With a most mixed feeling, wherein joy has no part, she resigns herself to a day she hoped never to have seen. Poor Marie Antoinette; with thy quick noble instincts; vehement glancings, vision all-too fitful narrow for the work thou hast to do! O there are tears in store for thee; bitterest wailings, soft womanly meltings, though thou hast the heart of an imperial Theresa's Daughter. Thou doomed one, shut thy eyes on the future!—

And so, in stately Procession, have passed the Elected of France. Some towards honour and quick fire-consummation; most towards dishonour; not a few towards massacre, confusion, emigration, desperation: all towards Eternity!— So many heterogeneities cast together into the fermenting-vat; there, with incalculable action, counteraction, elective affinities, explosive developments, to work out healing for a sick moribund System of Society! Probably the strangest Body of Men, if we consider well, that ever met together on our Planet on such an errand. So thousandfold complex a Society, ready to burst up from its infinite depths; and these men, its rulers and healers, without life-rule for themselves, — other life-rule than a Gospel according to Jean Jacques!¹ To the wisest of them, what we must call the wisest, man is properly an Accident under the sky. Man is without Duty round him; except it be “to make the Constitution.” He is without Heaven above him, or Hell beneath him; he has no God in the world.

¹ Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), by his exposition and advocacy of popular sovereignty, supplied the constructive criticism which was lacking in the writings of Voltaire, and was largely accountable for the spread of revolutionary opinion. He is often called the Evangelist or Apostle of Democracy.

[The universal optimism which attended the opening of the States-General was speedily dampened by a quarrel between the deputies of the Third Estate and those of the upper orders. The former desired that all the deputies should meet and vote together; the latter that each order should assemble by itself. After much delay the king decided to support

the nobility, and commanded the Estates to meet separately. He also informed them that their sole duty was to find a solution of the financial problem; they were not to attempt a general reform of the abuses of government.

But the Third Estate, led by Mirabeau, refused to cede, declared themselves the National Assembly, — representative of all France, — and invited the other two orders to join them. They also swore not to disperse until they had given a constitution to the nation. Their determination was met with complete surrender on the part of Louis XVI, and they were soon joined by the other orders.

The queen and the court party, however, were resolved that if the moral authority of royalty was insufficient, physical force should be employed to subdue the ambitions of the popular deputies. Marie Antoinette planned to dismiss Necker, the liberal minister, gather an armed force, and disband the Assembly. She brought troops into Versailles and Paris, and for the moment the destruction of the National Assembly seemed imminent. But the people of Paris saved the Revolution. Inflamed by the news of Necker's dismissal, which they regarded as the signal for the execution of the royal plot, and terrified by the sight of the foreign troops, they rose to defend themselves and the Assembly.]

BOOK V

THE THIRD ESTATE

CHAPTER VI

STORM AND VICTORY

BUT, to the living and the struggling, a new, Fourteenth morning dawns. Under all roofs of this distracted City is the nodus of a drama, not untragical, crowding towards solution. The bustlings and preparings, the tremors and menaces; the tears that fell from old eyes! This day, my sons, ye shall quit you like men. By the memory of your fathers' wrongs, by the hope of your children's rights! Tyranny impends in red wrath: help for you is none, if not in your own hands. This day ye must do or die.

From earliest light, a sleepless Permanent Committee has heard the old cry, now waxing almost frantic, mutinous: Arms! Arms! Provost Flesselles, or what traitors there are among you, may think of those Charleville Boxes.¹ A hundred-and-fifty thousand of us; and but the third man furnished with so much as a pike! Arms are the one thing needful: with arms we are an unconquerable man-defying National Guard; without arms, a rabble to be whiffed with grapeshot.

Happily the word has arisen, for no secret can be kept, — that there lie muskets at the *Hôtel des Invalides*.² Thither will we: King's Procureur M. Ethys de Corny, and whatsoever of authority a Permanent Committee can lend, shall

¹ The provost had promised that the gun manufactory at Charleville would send 30,000 guns, and pointed to boxes marked with the word *Artillerie* which had just come in. But when opened they were found to contain only rags.

² *Hôtel des Invalides* was built by Louis XIV as a retreat for his veterans. Here was located the most important arsenal in Paris.

go with us. Besenval's Camp¹ is there; perhaps he will not fire on us; if he kill us, we shall but die.

Alas, poor Besenval, with his troops melting away in that manner, has not the smallest humour to fire! At five o'clock this morning, as he lay dreaming, oblivious in the *École Militaire*, a "figure" stood suddenly at his bedside; "with face rather handsome; eyes inflamed, speech rapid and curt, air audacious:" such a figure drew Priam's curtains! The message and monition of the figure was, that resistance would be hopeless; that if blood flowed, woe to him who shed it. Thus spoke the figure: and vanished. "Withal there was a kind of eloquence that struck one." Besenval admits that he should have arrested him, but did not. Who this figure with inflamed eyes, with speech rapid and curt, might be? Besenval knows, but mentions not. Camille Desmoulins? Pythagorean Marquis Valadi, inflamed with "violent motions all night at the Palais Royal?" Fame names him, "Young M. Meillar;" then shuts her lips about him for ever.

In any case, behold about nine in the morning, our National Volunteers rolling in long wide flood, southwestward to the *Hôtel des Invalides*; in search of the one thing needful. King's Procureur M. Ethys de Corny and officials are there; the Curé of Saint-Étienne du Mont marches unpacific, at the head of his militant Parish; the Clerks of the Basoche² in red coats we see marching, now Volunteers of the Basoche; the Volunteers of the Palais Royal:³ — National Volunteers, numerable by tens of thousands; of one heart and mind. The King's muskets are the Nation's; think, old M. de Sombreuil,⁴ how, in this extremity, thou wilt refuse them!

¹ The royal party had concentrated a large number of foreign troops with which to overawe Paris and break up the National Assembly. Besenval was in command of the camp outside of Paris, with his headquarters at the Invalides.

² The Basoche was the association of students and clerks in the Paris law-courts.

³ The Palais Royal was the property of the Duke of Orleans, and with its gardens, cafés, and galleries formed the rendezvous of all the elements of resistance.

⁴ Sombreuil was the governor of the Invalides.

Old M. de Sombreuil would fain hold parley, send couriers; but it skills not: the walls are scaled, no Invalides firing a shot; the gates must be flung open. Patriotism rushes in, tumultuous, from grunsel up to ridge-tile, through all rooms and passages; rummaging distractedly for arms. What cellar, or what cranny can escape it? The arms are found; all safe there; lying packed in straw, — apparently with a view to being burnt! More ravenous than famishing lions over dead prey, the multitude, with clangour and vociferation, pounces on them; struggling, dashing, clutching: — to the jamming-up, to the pressure, fracture and probable extinction of the weaker Patriot. And so, with such protracted crash of deafening, most discordant Orchestra-music, the Scene is changed; and eight-and-twenty thousand sufficient firelocks are on the shoulders of as many National Guards, lifted thereby out of darkness into fiery light.

Let Besenval look at the glitter of these muskets, as they flash by! Gardes Françaises, it is said, have cannon levelled on him; ready to open, if need were, from the other side of the River. Motionless sits he; “astonished,” one may flatter oneself, “at the proud bearing (*fière contenance*) of the Parisians.” — And now, to the Bastille, ye intrepid Parisians! There grapeshot still threatens: thither all men’s thoughts and steps are now tending.

Old De Launay,¹ as we hinted, withdrew “into his interior” soon after midnight of Sunday. He remains there ever since, hampered, as all military gentlemen now are, in the saddest conflict of uncertainties. The Hôtel-de-Ville “invites” him to admit National Soldiers, which is a soft name for surrendering. On the other hand, His Majesty’s orders were precise. His garrison is but eighty-two old Invalides, reinforced by thirty-two young Swiss; his walls indeed are nine feet thick, he has cannon and powder; but, alas, only one day’s provision of victuals. The city too is French, the poor garrison

¹ De Launay was the governor of the Bastille, the ancient fortress which dominated the working-class quarter of Paris, the Suburb St. Antoine,

mostly French. Rigorous old De Launay, think what thou wilt do!

All morning, since nine, there has been a cry everywhere: To the Bastille! Repeated "deputations of citizens" have been here, passionate for arms; whom De Launay has got dismissed by soft speeches through port-holes. Towards noon, Elector Thuriot de la Rosière gains admittance; finds De Launay indisposed for surrender; nay disposed for blowing up the place rather. Thuriot mounts with him to the battlements: heaps of paving-stones, old iron and missiles lie piled; cannon all duly levelled; in every embrasure a cannon, — only drawn back a little! But outwards, behold, O Thuriot, how the multitude flows on, welling through every street: tocsin furiously pealing, all drums beating the *générale*: the Suburb Saint-Antoine rolling hitherward wholly, as one man! Such vision (spectral yet real) thou, O Thuriot, as from thy Mount of Vision, beholdest in this moment: prophetic of what other Phantasmagories, and loud-gibbering Spectral Realities, which thou yet beholdest not, but shalt! "*Que voulez-vous?*" said De Launay, turning pale at the sight, with an air of reproach, almost of menace. "Monsieur," said Thuriot, rising into the moral-sublime, "what mean *you*? Consider if I could not precipitate *both* of us from this height," — say only a hundred feet, exclusive of the walled ditch! Whereupon De Launay fell silent. Thuriot shows himself from some pinnacle, to comfort the multitude becoming suspicious, fremescent: then descends; departs with protest; with warning addressed also to the Invalides, — on whom, however, it produces but a mixed indistinct impression. The old heads are none of the clearest; besides, it is said, De Launay has been profuse of beverages (*prodigua des buissons*). They think, they will not fire, — if not fired on, if they can help it; but must, on the whole, be ruled considerably by circumstances.

Woe to thee, De Launay, in such an hour, if thou canst not, taking some one firm decision, *rule* circumstances! Soft speeches will not serve; hard grapeshot is questionable; but hovering between the two is *unquestionable*. Ever

wilder swells the tide of men; their infinite hum waxing ever louder, into imprecations, perhaps into crackle of stray musketry, — which latter, on walls nine feet thick, cannot do execution. The Outer Drawbridge has been lowered for Thuriot; new *deputation of citizens* (it is the third, and noisiest of all) penetrates that way into the Outer Court: soft speeches producing no clearance of these, De Launay gives fire; pulls up his Drawbridge. A slight sputter; — which has *kindled* the too combustible chaos; made it a roaring fire-chaos! Bursts forth Insurrection, at sight of its own blood (for there were deaths by that sputter of fire), into endless rolling explosion of musketry, distraction, execration; — and over head, from the Fortress, let one great gun, with its grapeshot, go booming, to show what we *could* do. The Bastille is besieged!

On, then, all Frenchmen, that have hearts in your bodies! Roar with all your throats, of cartilage and metal, ye Sons of Liberty; stir spasmodically whatsoever of utmost faculty is in you, soul, body, or spirit; for it is the hour! Smite, thou Louis Tournay, cartwright of the Marais, old-soldier of the Regiment Dauphiné; smite at the Outer Drawbridge chain, though the fiery hail whistles round thee! Never, over nave or fellowe, did thy axe strike such a stroke. Down with it, man; down with it to Orcus: let the whole accursed Edifice sink thither, and Tyranny be swallowed up for ever! Mounted, some say, on the roof of the guard-room, some “on bayonets stuck into joints of the wall,” Louis Tournay smites, brave Aubin Bonnemère (also an old soldier) seconding him: the chain yields, breaks; the huge Drawbridge slams down, thundering (*avec fracas*). Glorious: and yet, alas, it is still but the outworks. The Eight grim Towers, with their Invalide musketry, their paving stones and cannon-mouths, still soar aloft intact; — Ditch yawning impassable, stone-faced; the inner Drawbridge with its *back* towards us: the Bastille is still to take!

To describe this Siege of the Bastille (thought to be one of the most important in History) perhaps transcends the

talent of mortals. Could one but, after infinite reading, get to understand so much as the plan of the building! But there is open Esplanade, at the end of the Rue Saint-Antoine; there are such Forecourts, *Cour Avancé*, *Cour de l'Orme*, arched Gateway (where Louis Tournay now fights); then new drawbridges, dormant-bridges, rampart-bastions, and the grim Eight Towers: a labyrinthic Mass, high-frowning there, of all ages from twenty years to four hundred and twenty; — beleaguered, in this its last hour, as we said, by mere Chaos come again! Ordnance of all calibres; throats of all capacities; men of all plans, every man his own engineer: seldom since the war of Pygmies and Cranes was there seen so anomalous a thing. Half-pay Elie is home for a suit of regimentals; no one would heed him in coloured clothes: half-pay Hulin is haranguing Gardes Françaises in the Place de Grève. Frantic Patriots pick up the grapeshots; bear them, still hot (or seemingly so), to the Hôtel-de-Ville: — Paris, you perceive, is to be burnt! Flesselles is “pale to the very lips,” for the roar of the multitude grows deep. Paris wholly has got to the acme of its frenzy; whirled, all ways, by panic madness. At every street-barricade, there whirls simmering a minor whirlpool, — strengthening the barricade, since God knows what is coming; and all minor whirlpools play distractedly into that grand Fire-Mahlstrom which is lashing round the Bastille.

And so it lashes and it roars. Cholat the wine-merchant has become an impromptu cannoneer. See Georget, of the Marine Service, fresh from Brest, ply the King of Siam's cannon. Singular (if we were not used to the like): Georget lay, last night, taking his ease at his inn; the King of Siam's cannon also lay, knowing nothing of *him*, for a hundred years. Yet now, at the right instant, they have got together, and discourse eloquent music. For, hearing what was toward, Georget sprang from the Brest Diligence, and ran. Gardes Françaises also will be here, with real artillery: were not the walls so thick! — Upwards from the Esplanade, horizontally from all neighbouring roofs and windows, flashes one irregular deluge of musketry, without effect. The In-

valides lie flat, firing comparatively at their ease from behind stone; hardly through portholes, show the tip of a nose. We fall, shot; and make no impression!

Let conflagration rage; of whatsoever is combustible! Guard-rooms are burnt, Invalides mess-rooms. A distracted "Perukemaker with two fiery torches" is for burning "the saltpetres of the Arsenal"; — had not a woman run screaming; had not a Patriot, with some tincture of Natural Philosophy, instantly struck the wind out of him (butt of musket on pit of stomach), overturned barrels, and stayed the devouring element. A young beautiful lady, seized escaping in these Outer Courts, and thought falsely to be De Launay's daughter, shall be burnt in De Launay's sight; she lies swooned on a paillasse: but again a Patriot, it is brave Aubin Bonnemère the old soldier, dashes in, and rescues her. Straw is burnt; three cartloads of it, hauled thither, go up in white smoke, almost to the choking of Patriotism itself; so that Elie had, with singed brows, to drag back one cart; and Réole the "gigantic haberdasher" another. Smoke as of Tophet; confusion as of Babel; noise as of the Crack of Doom!

Blood flows; the aliment of new madness. The wounded are carried into houses of the Rue Cerisaie; the dying leave their last mandate not to yield till the accursed Stronghold fall. And yet, alas, how fall? The walls are so thick! Deputations, three in number, arrive from the Hôtel-de-Ville; Abbé Fauchet (who was of one) can say, with what almost superhuman courage of benevolence. These wave their Town-flag in the arched Gateway; and stand, rolling their drum; but to no purpose. In such Crack of Doom, De Launay cannot hear them, dare not believe them: they return, with justified rage, the whew of lead still singing in their ears. What to do? The Firemen are here, squirting with their fire-pumps on the Invalides cannon, to wet the touchholes; they unfortunately cannot squirt so high; but produce only clouds of spray. Individuals of classical knowledge propose *catapults*. Santerre, the sonorous Brewer of the Suburb Saint-Antoine, advises rather that the place

be fired, by a "mixture of phosphorus and oil-of-turpentine spouted up through forcing pumps:" O Spinola-Santerre, hast thou the mixture *ready*? Every man his own engineer! And still the fire-deluge abates not: even women are firing, and Turks; at least one woman (with her sweetheart), and one Turk. Gardes Françaises have come: real cannon, real cannoneers. Usher Maillard is busy; half-pay Elie, half-pay Hulin rage in the midst of thousands.

How the great Bastille Clock ticks (inaudible) in its Inner Court there, at its ease, hour after hour; as if nothing special, for it or the world, were passing! It tolled One when the firing began; and is now pointing towards Five, and still the firing slakes not. — Far down, in their vaults, the seven Prisoners hear muffled din as of earthquakes; their Turn-keys answer vaguely.

Wo to thee, De Launay, with thy poor hundred Invalides! Broglie is distant, and his ears heavy: Besenval hears, but can send no help. One poor troop of Hussars has crept, reconnoitring, cautiously along the Quais, as far as the Pont Neuf. "We are come to join you," said the Captain; for the crowd seems shoreless. A large-headed dwarfish individual, of smoke-bleared aspect, shambles forward, opening his blue lips, for there is sense in him; and croaks: "Alight then, and give up your arms!" The Hussar-Captain is too happy to be escorted to the Barriers, and dismissed on parole. Who the squat individual was? Men answer, It is M. Marat, author of the excellent pacific *Avis au Peuple*! Great truly, O thou remarkable Dogleech, is this thy day of emergence and new-birth: and yet this same day come four years —! — But let the curtains of the Future hang.

What shall De Launay do? One thing only De Launay could have done: what he said he would do. Fancy him sitting, from the first, with lighted taper, within arm's length of the Powder-Magazine; motionless, like old Roman Senator, or Bronze Lamp-holder; coldly apprising Thuriot, and all men, by a slight motion of his eye, what his resolution was: — Harmless he sat there, while unharmed; but the King's Fortress, meanwhile, could, might, would, or should,

in nowise be surrendered, save to the King's Messenger: one old man's life is worthless, so it be lost with honour; but think, ye brawling *canaille*, how will it be when a whole Bastille springs skyward! — In such statuesque, taper-holding attitude, one fancies De Launay might have left Thuriot, the red Clerks of the Basoche, Curé of Saint-Stephen and all the tag-rag-and-bobtail of the world, to work their will.

And yet, withal, he could not do it. Hast thou considered how each man's heart is so tremulously responsive to the hearts of all men; hast thou noted how omnipotent is the very sound of many men? How their shriek of indignation palsies the strong soul; their howl of contumely withers with unfelt pangs? The Ritter Glück confessed that the ground-tone of the noblest passage, in one of his noblest Operas, was the voice of the Populace he had heard at Vienna, crying to their Kaiser: Bread! Bread! Great is the combined voice of men; the utterance of their *instincts*, which are truer than their *thoughts*: it is the greatest a man encounters, among the sounds and shadows which make up this World of Time. He who can resist that, has his footing somewhere *beyond* Time. De Launay could not do it. Distracted, he hovers between two; hopes in the middle of despair; surrenders not his Fortress; declares that he will blow it up, seizes torches to blow it up, and does not blow it. Unhappy old De Launay, it is the death-agony of thy Bastille and thee! Jail, Jailoring and Jailer, all three, such as they may have been, must finish.

For four hours now has the World Bedlam roared: call it the World-Chimera, blowing fire! The poor Invalides have sunk under their battlements, or rise only with reversed muskets: they have made a white flag of napkins: go beating the *chamade*, or seeming to beat, for one can hear nothing. The very Swiss at the Portcullis look weary of firing; disheartened in the fire-deluge: a porthole at the drawbridge is opened, as by one that would speak. See Huissier Mailard, the shifty man! On his plank, swinging over the abyss of that stone Ditch; plank resting on parapet, balanced by

weight of Patriots, — he hovers perilous: such a Dove towards such an Ark! Deftly, thou shifty Usher: one man already fell; and lies smashed, far down there, against the masonry! Usher Maillard falls not: deftly, unerring he walks, with outspread palm. The Swiss holds a paper through his porthole; the shifty Usher snatches it, and returns. Terms of surrender: Pardon, immunity to all! Are they accepted? — “*Foi d’officier*, On the word of an officer,” answers half-pay Hulin, — or half-pay Elie, for men do not agree on it, “they are!” Sinks the drawbridge, — Usher Maillard bolting it when down; rushes in the living deluge: the Bastille is fallen! *Victoire! La Bastille est prise!*

CHAPTER VII

NOT A REVOLT

WHY dwell on what follows? Hulin’s *foi d’officier* should have been kept, but could not. The Swiss stand drawn up, disguised in white canvas smocks; the Invalides without disguise; their arms all piled against the wall. The first rush of victors, in ecstasy that the death-peril is passed, “leaps joyfully on their necks;” but new victors rush, and ever new, also in ecstasy not wholly of joy. As we said, it was a living deluge, plunging headlong: had not the Gardes Françaises, in their cool military way, “wheeled round with arms levelled,” it would have plunged suicidally, by the hundred or the thousand, into the Bastille-ditch.

And so it goes plunging through court and corridor; billowing uncontrollable, firing from windows — on itself; in hot frenzy of triumph, of grief and vengeance for its slain. The poor Invalides will fare ill; one Swiss, running off in his white smock, is driven back, with a death thrust. Let all Prisoners be marched to the Townhall, to be judged! — Alas, already one poor Invalide has his right hand slashed off him; his maimed body dragged to the Place de Grève, and hanged there. This same right hand, it is said, turned back De Launay from the Powder-Magazine, and saved Paris.

De Launay, “discovered in grey frock with poppy-coloured

riband," is for killing himself with the sword of his cane. He shall to the Hôtel-de-Ville; Hulin, Maillard and others escorting him; Elie marching foremost "with the capitulation-paper on his sword's point." Through roarings and cursings; through hustlings, clutchings, and at last through strokes! Your escort is hustled aside, felled down; Hulin sinks exhausted on a heap of stones. Miserable De Launay! He shall never enter the Hôtel-de-Ville: only his "bloody hair-queue, held up in a bloody hand;" that shall enter, for a sign. The bleeding trunk lies on the steps there; the head is off through the streets; ghastly, aloft on a pike.

Rigorous De Launay has died; crying out, "O friends, kill me fast!" Merciful De Losme must die; though Gratitude embraces him, in this fearful hour, and will die for him; it avails not. Brothers, your wrath is cruel! Your Place de Grève is become a Throat of the Tiger; full of mere fierce bellowings, and thirst of blood. One other officer is massacred; one other Invalide is hanged on the Lamp-iron; with difficulty, with generous perseverance, the Gardes Françaises will save the rest. Provost Flesselles, stricken long since with the paleness of death, must descend from his seat, "to be judged at the Palais Royal": — alas, to be shot dead, by an unknown hand, at the turning of the first street! —

O evening sun of July, how, at this hour, thy beams fall slant on reapers amid peaceful woody fields; on old women spinning in cottages; on ships far out in the silent main; on Balls at the Orangerie of Versailles, where high-rouged Dames of the Palace are even now dancing with double-jacketed Hussar-Officers; — and also on this roaring Hell-porch of a Hôtel-de-Ville! Babel Tower, with the confusion of tongues, were not Bedlam added with the conflagration of thoughts, was no type of it. One forest of distracted steel bristles, endless, in front of an Electoral Committee; points itself, in horrid radii, against this and the other accused breast. It was the Titans warring with Olympus; and they, scarcely crediting it, have *conquered*: prodigy of prodigies; delirious, — as it could not but be. Denunciation, ven-

geance; blaze of triumph on a dark ground of terror: all outward, all inward things fallen into one general wreck of madness! . . .

In the Court, all is mystery, not without whisperings of terror; though ye dream of lemonade and epaulettes, ye foolish women! His Majesty, kept in happy ignorance, perhaps dreams of double-barrels and the Woods of Meudon. Late at night, the Duke de Liancourt, having official right of entrance, gains access to the Royal Apartments; unfolds, with earnest clearness, in his constitutional way, the Job's-news. "*Mais*," said poor Louis, "*c'est une révolte*, Why, that is a revolt!" — "Sire," answered Liancourt, "it is not a revolt, — it is a revolution."

[The victory of the people of Paris frustrated the second attempt of royalty to free itself from the threatening incubus of popular authority. The National Assembly continued its sessions, discussing the abstract rights of man and the practical reform of abuses. Throughout the country there swept a wave of revolt against the nobility and the feudal system. The demand for reform culminated when, on August 4th, the National Assembly voted the abolition of all the privileges of the clergy and noblesse.

But the misery of the people was not alleviated by the academic discussions of the Assembly. Paris, especially, was threatened by famine, and to the hunger and suffering of the people was added continual suspicion of court intrigues. Rumors came to them that the king and queen were planning to escape from Versailles and, by coöperation with the royal troops, to reëstablish the absolute power of the court in some city of the provinces. The sole salvation of the people, they believed, lay in the presence of the king. They could then protect him from his false advisers and bread would be cheap. As always, in times of hardship, the women were most directly affected, and it is not surprising that to them fell the rôle of action.]

BOOK VII

THE INSURRECTION OF WOMEN

CHAPTER II

O RICHARD, O MY KING

FOR, alas, neither is the Townhall itself without misgivings. The Nether Sansculottic world has been suppressed hitherto: but then the Upper Court-world! Symptoms there are that the Œil-de-Bœuf is rallying.

More than once in the Townhall Sanhedrim,¹ often enough from those outspoken Bakers'-queues, has the wish uttered itself: O that our Restorer of French Liberty² were here; that he could see with his own eyes, not with the false eyes of Queens and Cabals, and his really good heart be enlightened! For falsehood still environs him; intriguing Dukes de Guiche, with Bodyguards; scouts of Bouillé;³ a new flight of intriguers, now that the old is flown. What else means this advent of the *Regiment de Flandre*;⁴ entering Versailles, as we hear, on the 23rd of September, with two pieces of cannon? Did not the Versailles National Guard do duty at the Château? Had they not Swiss;⁵ Hundred Swiss; *Gardes-du-Corps*, Bodyguards so-called? Nay, it

¹ The Sanhedrim was the supreme national council of the Jews. It was at the Hotel de Ville, or Townhall, of Paris that the municipal government held its sessions.

² The title voted to Louis XVI after his surrender and visit to Paris in July.

³ Bouillé commanded the army at Metz and upon him Marie Antoinette rested her hopes for protection against the dangers of the Paris mob, as well as for assistance in flight.

⁴ Which, because it had no affiliations with the people, would be ready to cover the retreat of the royal family.

⁵ The hired Swiss body-guard were absolutely devoted to the king. Other instances of the use of foreign soldiers as a personal guard are to be found in the Scotch archers of Louis XI and the Swiss guards of the Pope.

would seem, the number of Bodyguards on duty has, by a manœuvre, been doubled: the new relieving Battalion of them arrived at its time; but the old relieved one does not *depart!*

Actually, there runs a whisper through the best-informed Upper-Circles, or a nod still more portentous than whispering, of his Majesty's flying to Metz; of a Bond (to stand by him therein), which has been signed by Noblesse and Clergy, to the incredible amount of thirty, or even of sixty thousand. Lafayette coldly whispers it, and coldly asseverates it, to Count d'Estaing at the Dinner-table; and D'Estaing, one of the bravest men, quakes to the core lest some lackey overhear it; and tumbles thoughtful, without sleep, all night. Regiment de Flandre, as we said, is clearly arrived. His Majesty, they say, hesitates about sanctioning the Fourth of August; makes observations, of chilling tenor, on the very Rights of Man! Likewise, may not all persons, the Bakers'-queues themselves discern, on the streets of Paris, the most astonishing number of Officers on furlough, Crosses of St. Louis, and such like? Some reckon "from a thousand to twelve hundred." Officers of all uniforms; nay one uniform never before seen by eye: green faced with red! The tri-color cockade is not always visible: but what, in the name of Heaven, may these *black* cockades, which some wear, foreshadow?

Hunger whets everything, especially Suspicion and Indignation. Realities themselves, in this Paris, have grown unreal; preternatural. Phantasms once more stalk through the brain of hungry France. O ye laggards and dastards, cry shrill voices from the Queues, if ye had the hearts of men, ye would take your pikes and secondhand firelocks, and look into it; not leave your wives and daughters to be starved, murdered and worse! — Peace, women! The heart of man is bitter and heavy; Patriotism, driven out by Patrollotism,¹ knows not what to resolve on.

¹ The activity of the National Guards in suppressing disorder amongst the hungry people of Paris was highly resented, and because of the ubiquity of busy patrols was named Patrollotism.

The truth is, the Œil-de-Bœuf has rallied; to a certain unknown extent. A changed Œil-de-Bœuf; with Versailles National Guards, in their tricolor cockades, doing duty there; a Court all flaring with tricolor! Yet even to a tricolor Court men will rally. Ye loyal hearts, burnt-out Seigneurs, rally round your Queen! With wishes; which will produce hopes; which will produce attempts!

For indeed self-preservation being such a law of Nature, what can a rallied Court do, but attempt and endeavour, or call it *plot*, — with such wisdom and unwisdom as it has? They will fly, escorted, to Metz, where brave Bouillé commands; they will raise the Royal Standard: the Bond-signatures¹ shall become armed men. Were not the King so languid! Their Bond, if at all signed, must be signed without his privity. — Unhappy King, *he* has but one resolution: not to have a civil war. For the rest, he still hunts, having ceased lockmaking; he still dozes, and digests; is clay in the hands of the potter. Ill will it fare with him, in a world where all is helping itself; where, as has been written, “who-soever is not hammer must be stithy;” and “the very hysop on the wall grows there, in that chink, because the whole Universe could not prevent its growing!”

But as for the coming up of this Regiment de Flandre, may it not be urged that there were Saint-Huruge Petitions,² and continual meal-mobs? Undebauched Soldiers, be there plot, or only dim elements of a plot, are always good. Did not the Versailles Municipality (an old Monarchic one, not yet refounded into a Democratic) instantly second the proposal? Nay the very Versailles National Guard, wearied with continual duty at the Château, did not object; only Draper Lecointre, who is now Major Lecointre, shook his head. — Yes, Friends, surely it was natural this Regiment de Flandre should be sent for, since it could be got. It was natural

¹ The Queen was secretly issuing paper money to cover the military expenses which were necessary for flight, and for making the court independent of the people.

² Saint-Huruge was the chief tool of the Duke of Orleans, and worked constantly to render the court unpopular with the masses.

that, at sight of military bandoleers, the heart of the rallied Eil-de-Bœuf should revive; and Maids of Honour, and gentlemen of honour, speak comfortable words to epauletted defenders, and to one another. Natural also, and mere common civility, that the Body-guards, a Regiment of Gentlemen, should invite their Flandre brethren to a Dinner of welcome! — Such invitation, in the last days of September, is given and accepted.

Dinners are defined as “the *ultimate* act of communion;” men that can have communion in nothing else, can sympathetically eat together, can still rise into some glow of brotherhood over food and wine. The Dinner is fixed on, for Thursday the First of October; and ought to have a fine effect. Further, as such Dinner may be rather extensive, and even the Non-commissioned and the Common man be introduced, to see and to hear, could not his Majesty’s Opera Apartment, which has lain quite silent ever since Kaiser Joseph¹ was here, be obtained for the purpose? — The Hall of the Opera is granted; the Salon d’Hercule shall be drawing-room. Not only the Officers of Flandre, but of the Swiss, of the Hundred Swiss; nay of the Versailles National Guard, such of them as have any loyalty, shall feast: it will be a Repast like few.

And now suppose this Repast, the solid part of it, transacted; and the first bottle over. Suppose the customary loyal toasts drunk; the King’s health, the Queen’s with deafening vivats; — that of the Nation “omitted,” or even “rejected.” Suppose champagne flowing; with pot-valorous speech, with instrumental music; empty featherheads growing ever the noisier, in their own emptiness, in each other’s noise. Her Majesty, who looks unusually sad to-night (his Majesty sitting dulled with the day’s hunting), is told that the sight of it would cheer her. Behold! She enters there, issuing from her State-rooms, like the Moon from clouds, this fairest unhappy Queen of Hearts; royal Husband by her side, young Dauphin in her arms! She descends from the Boxes, amid splendour and acclaim;

¹ Emperor of Austria and brother of Marie Antoinette.

walks queenlike round the Tables; gracefully escorted, gracefully nodding; her looks full of sorrow, yet of gratitude and daring, with the hope of France on her mother-bosom! And now, the band striking up, *O Richard, O mon Roi, l'univers t'abandonne* (O Richard, O my King, the world is all forsaking thee) — could man do other than rise to height of pity, of loyal valour? Could featherheaded young ensigns do other than, by white Bourbon Cockades, handed them from fair fingers; by waving of swords, drawn to pledge the Queen's health; by trampling of National Cockades; by scaling the Boxes, whence intrusive murmurs may come; by vociferation, tripudiation, sound, fury and distraction, within doors and without, — testify what tempest-tost state of vacuity they are in? Till champagne and tripudiation do their work; and all lie silent, horizontal; passively slumbering with meed-of-battle dreams! —

A natural Repast; in ordinary times, a harmless one: now fatal, as that of Thyestes;¹ as that of Job's sons, when a strong wind smote the four corners of their banquet-house!² Poor ill-advised Marie-Antoinette with a woman's vehemence, not with a sovereign's foresight! It was so natural, yet so unwise. Next day, in public speech of ceremony, her Majesty declares herself "delighted with the Thursday."

The heart of the Œil-de-Bœuf glows into Hope; into daring, which is premature. Rallied Maids of Honour, waited on by Abbés, sew "white cockades;" distribute them, with words, with glances, to epauletted youths; who, in return, may kiss, not without fervour, the fair sewing fingers. Captains of horse and foot go swashing with "enormous white cockades;" nay one Versailles National Captain has mounted the like, so witching were the words and glances, and laid aside his tricolor! Well may Major Lecointre

¹ According to legend, Atreus, King of Mycenæ, slew the sons of his brother Thyestes and served their bodies to Thyestes in a banquet.

² *Job* i. 18, 19. "There came also another and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee."

shake his head with a look of severity; and speak audible resentful words. But now a swashbuckler, with enormous white cockade, overhearing the Major, invites him insolently, once and then again elsewhere, to recant; and failing that, to duel. Which latter feat Major Lecointre declares that he will not perform, not at least by any known laws of fence; that he nevertheless will, according to mere law of Nature, by dirk and blade, "exterminate" any "vile gladiator" who may insult him or the Nation; — whereupon (for the Major is actually drawing his implement) "they are parted," and no weasands slit.

CHAPTER III

BLACK COCKADES

BUT fancy what effect this Thyestes Repast, and trampling on the National Cockade, must have had in the *Salle des Menus*;¹ in the famishing Bakers'-queues at Paris! Nay, such Thyestes Repasts, it would seem, continue. Flandre has given its Counter-Dinner to the Swiss and Hundred Swiss; then on Saturday there has been another.

Yes, here with us is famine; but yonder at Versailles is food, enough and to spare! Patriotism stands in queue, shivering hungerstruck, insulted by Patrollotism; while bloodyminded Aristocrats, heated with excess of high living, trample on the National Cockade. Can the atrocity be true? Nay, look: green uniforms faced with red; black cockades, — the colour of Night! Are we to have military onfall; and death also by starvation? For behold the Corbeil Cornboat, which used to come twice a-day, with its Plaster-of-Paris meal, now comes only once. And the Townhall is deaf; and the men are laggard and dastard! — At the Café de Foy, this Saturday evening, a new thing is seen, not the last of its kind: a woman engaged in public speaking. Her poor man, she says, was put to silence by his District; their Presidents and Officials would not let him speak. Wherefore she here with her shrill tongue will

¹ The hall where the National Assembly held its deliberations.

speaking; denouncing, while her breath endures, the Corbeil Boat, the Plaster-of-Paris bread, sacrilegious Opera-dinners, green uniforms, Pirate Aristocrats, and those black cockades of theirs! —

Truly, it is time for the black cockades at least to vanish. Them Patrollotism itself will not protect. Nay, sharp-tempered "M. Tassin," at the Tuileries parade on Sunday morning, forgets all National military rule; starts from the ranks, wrenches down one black cockade which is swashing ominous there, and tramples it fiercely into the soil of France. Patrollotism itself is not without suppressed fury. Also the Districts begin to stir; the voice of President Danton reverberates in the Cordeliers:¹ People's-Friend Marat has flown to Versailles and back again; — swart bird, not of the halcyon kind.

And so Patriot meets promenading Patriot, this Sunday; and sees his own grim care reflected on the face of another. Groups, in spite of Patrollotism, which is not so alert as usual, fluctuate deliberative; groups on the Bridges, on the Quais, at the patriotic Cafés. And ever as any black cockade may emerge, rises the many-voiced growl and bark: *A bas*, Down! All black cockades are ruthlessly plucked off: one individual picks his up again; kisses it, attempts to refix it; but a "hundred canes start into the air," and he desists. Still worse went it with another individual; doomed, by extempore *Plebiscitum*, to the Lanterne;² saved, with difficulty, by some active *Corps-de-Garde*. — Lafayette sees signs of an effervescence; which he doubles his Patrols, doubles his diligence, to prevent. So passes Sunday, the 4th of October 1789.

Sullen is the male heart, repressed by Patrollotism; vehement is the female, irrepressible. The public-speaking woman at the Palais Royal was not the only speaking one:

¹ The most democratic of the clubs of Paris, organized by Danton; so-called because it held its meetings in the old church of the Cordeliers, a monastic order.

² The lantern posts of Paris served conveniently as gibbets for mob lynching.

— Men know not what the pantry is, when it grows empty; only house-mothers know. O women, wives of men that will only calculate and not act! Patrollotism is strong; but Death, by starvation and military onfall, is stronger. Patrollotism represses male Patriotism: but female Patriotism? Will Guards named National thrust their bayonets into the bosoms of women? Such thought, or rather such dim unshaped raw material of a thought, ferments universally under the female night-cap; and, by earliest daybreak, on slight hint, will explode.

CHAPTER IV

THE MENADS ¹

. . . A thought, or dim raw material of a thought, was fermenting all night, universally in the female head, and might explode. In squalid garret, on Monday morning Maternity awakes, to hear children-weeping for bread. Maternity must forth to the streets, to the herb-markets and Bakers'-queues; meets there with hunger-stricken Maternity, sympathetic, exasperative. O we unhappy women! But, instead of Bakers'-queues, why not to Aristocrats' palaces, the root of the matter? *Allons!* Let us assemble. To the Hôtel-de-Ville; to Versailles; to the Lanterne!

In one of the Guardhouses of the Quartier Saint-Eustache, "a young woman" seizes a drum, — for how shall National Guards give fire on women, on a young woman? The young woman seizes the drum; sets forth, beating it, "uttering cries relative to the dearth of grains." Descend, O mothers; descend ye Judiths,² to food and revenge! — All women gather and go; crowds storm all stairs, force out all women: the female Insurrectionary Force, according to Camille, resembles the English Naval one; there is a universal "Press of women." Robust Dames of the Halle, slim

¹ The female companions of Dionysus ("Bacchantes").

² Judith was the heroine of the Book of that name in the Apocrypha of the Old Testament. To save the Israelites from the Assyrian general, Holofernes, she entered his camp, and after consenting to spend the night in his tent, struck off his head while he slept.

Mantua-makers, assiduous, risen with the dawn; ancient Virginity tripping to matins; the Housemaid, with early broom; all must go. Rouse ye, O women; the laggard men will not act; they say, we ourselves may act!

And so, like snowbreak from the mountains, for every staircase is a melted brook, it storms; tumultuous, wild-shrilling, towards the Hôtel-de-Ville. Tumultuous; with or without drum-music: for the Faubourg Saint-Antoine also has tucked up its gown; and with besom-staves, fire-irons, and even rusty pistols (void of ammunition), is flowing on. Sound of it flies, with a velocity of sound, to the utmost Barriers. By seven o'clock, on this raw October morning, fifth of the month, the Townhall will see wonders. Nay, as chance would have it, a male party are already there; clustering tumultuously round some National Patrol, and a Baker who has been seized with short weights. They are there; and have even lowered the rope of the Lanterne. So that the official persons have to smuggle forth the short-weighting Baker by back doors, and even send "to all the Districts" for more force.

Grand it was, says Camille, to see so many Judiths, from eight to ten thousand of them in all, rushing out to search into the root of the matter! Not unfrightful it must have been; ludicro-terrific, and most unmanageable. At such hour the overwatched Three Hundred are not yet stirring: none but some Clerks, a company of National Guards; and M. de Gouvion, the Major-general. Gouvion has fought in America for the cause of civil Liberty; a man of no inconsiderable heart, but deficient in head. He is, for the moment, in his back apartment; assuaging Usher Maillard, the Bastille-sergeant, who has come, as too many do, with "representations." The assuagement is still incomplete when our Judiths arrive.

The National Guards form on the outer stairs, with levelled bayonets; the ten thousand Judiths press up, resistless; with obtestations, with outspread hands, — merely to speak to the Mayor. The rear forces them; nay, from male hands in the rear, stones already fly: the National Guard

must do one of two things; sweep the Place de Grève with cannon, or else open to right and left. They open; the living deluge rushes in. Through all rooms and cabinets, upwards to the topmost belfry: ravenous; seeking arms, seeking Mayors, seeking justice; — while, again, the better-dressed speak kindly to the Clerks; point out the misery of these poor women; also their ailments, some even of an interesting sort.

Poor M. de Gouvion is shiftless in this extremity; — a man shiftless, perturbed: who will one day commit suicide. How happy for him that Usher Maillard the shifty was there, at the moment, though making representations! Fly back, thou shifty Maillard: seek the Bastille Company; and O return fast with it; above all, with thy own shifty head! For, behold, the Judiths can find no Mayor or Municipal; scarcely, in the topmost belfry, can they find poor Abbé Lefevre the Powder-distributor. Him, for want of a better, they suspend there: in the pale morning light; over the top of all Paris, which swims in one's failing eyes: — a horrible end? Nay, the rope broke, as French ropes often did; or else an Amazon cut it. Abbé Lefevre falls, some twenty feet, rattling among the leads; and lives long years after, though always with "a *tremblement* in the limbs."

And now doors fly under hatchets; the Judiths have broken the Armory; have seized guns and cannons, three money-bags, paper-heaps; torches flare: in few minutes our brave Hôtel-de-Ville, which dates from the Fourth Henry, will, with all that it holds, be in flames!

CHAPTER V

USHER MAILLARD

IN flames, truly, — were it not that Usher Maillard, swift of foot, shifty of head, has returned!

Maillard, of his own motion, — for Gouvion or the rest would not even sanction him, — snatches a drum; descends the Porch-stairs, ran-tan, beating sharp, with loud rolls, his Rogue's-march: To Versailles! *Allons; à Versailles!* As

men beat on kettle or warming-pan, when angry she-bees, or say, flying desperate wasps, are to be hived; and the desperate insects hear it, and cluster round it, — simply as round a guidance, where there was none: so now these Menads round shift-y Maillard, Riding-Usher of the Châtelet. The axe pauses uplifted; Abbé Lefevre is left half-hanged: from the belfry downwards all vomits itself. What rub-a-dub is that? Stanislas Maillard, Bastille-hero, will lead us to Versailles? Joy to thee, Maillard; blessed art thou above Riding-Ushers! Away, then, away!

The seized cannon are yoked with seized cart-horses: brown-locked Demoiselle Théroigne, with pike and helmet, sits there as gunneress, “with haughty eye and serene fair countenance;” comparable, some think, to the *Maid* of Orléans, or even recalling the “idea of Pallas Athene.” Maillard (for his drum still rolls) is, by heaven-rending acclamation, admitted General. Maillard hastens the languid march. Maillard, beating rhythmic, with sharp rantan, all along the Quais, leads forward, with difficulty, his Menadic host. Such a host — marched not in silence! The bargeman pauses on the River; all wagoners and coach-drivers fly; men peer from windows, — not women, lest they be pressed. Sight of sights: Bacchantes, in these ultimate Formalized Ages! Bronze Henri looks on, from his Pont-Neuf; the Monarchic Louvre, Medicean Tuileries see a day like none heretofore seen. . . .

On the Elysian Fields there is pause and fluctuation; but, for Maillard, no return. He persuades his Menads, clamorous for arms and the Arsenal, that no arms are in the Arsenal; that an unarmed attitude, and petition to a National Assembly, will be the best: he hastily nominates or sanctions generaleesses, captains of tens and fifties; — and so, in loosest-flowing order, to the rhythm of some “eight drums” (having laid aside his own), with the Bastille Volunteers bringing up his rear, once more takes the road.

Chaillot, which will promptly yield baked loaves, is not plundered; nor are the Sèvres Potteries broken. The old arches of Sèvres Bridge echo under Menadic feet; Seine

River gushes on with his perpetual murmur; and Paris flings after us the boom of tocsin and alarm-drum, — inaudible, for the present, amid shrill-sounding hosts, and the splash of rainy weather. To Meudon, to Saint-Cloud, on both hands, the report of them is gone abroad; and hearths, this evening, will have a topic. The press of women still continues, for it is the cause of all Eve's Daughters, mothers that are, or that ought to be. No carriage-lady, were it with never such hysterics, but must dismount, in the mud roads, in her silk shoes, and walk. In this manner, amid wild October weather, they, a wild unwinged stork-flight, through the astonished country wend their way. Travellers of all sorts they stop; especially travellers or couriers from Paris. Deputy Lechapelier, in his elegant vesture, from his elegant vehicle, looks forth amazed through his spectacles; apprehensive for life; — states eagerly that he is Patriot-Deputy Lechapelier, and even Old-President Lechapelier, who presided on the Night of Pentecost, and is original member of the Breton Club. Thereupon "rises huge shout of *Vive Lechapelier*, and several armed persons spring up behind and before to escort him."

Nevertheless, news, dispatches from Lafayette, or vague noise of rumour, have pierced through, by side roads. In the National Assembly, while all is busy discussing the order of the day; regretting that there should be Anti-national Repasts in Opera-Halls; that his Majesty should still hesitate about accepting the Rights of Man, and hang conditions and peradventures on them — Mirabeau steps up to the President, experienced Mounier as it chanced to be; and articulates, in bass under-tone: "*Mounier, Paris marche sur nous* (Paris is marching on us)." — "May be (*Je n'en sais rien*)!" — "Believe it, or disbelieve it, that is not my concern; but Paris, I say, is marching on us. Fall suddenly unwell; go over to the Château; tell them this. There is not a moment to lose." — "Paris marching on us?" responds Mounier, with an atrabiliar accent: "Well, so much the better! We shall the sooner be a Republic." Mirabeau quits

him, as one quits an experienced President getting blindfold into deep waters; and the order of the day continues as before. . . .

CHAPTER VI

TO VERSAILLES

FOR, indeed, about this same moment, Maillard has halted his draggled Menads on the last hill-top; and now Versailles, and the Château of Versailles, and far and wide the inheritance of Royalty opens to the wondering eye. From far on the right, over Marly and Saint-Germains-en-Laye; round towards Rambouillet, on the left: beautiful all; softly embosomed; as if in sadness, in the dim moist weather! And near before us is Versailles, New and Old; with that broad frondent *Avenue de Versailles* between, — stately-frondent, broad, three hundred feet as men reckon, with its four Rows of Elms; and then the *Château de Versailles*, ending in royal Parks and Pleasances, gleaming lakelets, arbours, Labyrinths, the *Ménagerie*, and Great and Little Trianon. High-towered dwellings, leafy pleasant places; where the gods of this lower world abide: whence, nevertheless, black Care cannot be excluded; whither Menadic Hunger is even now advancing, armed with pike-thyrsi!

Yes, yonder, Mesdames, where our straight frondent Avenue, joined, as you note, by Two frondent brother Avenues from this hand and from that, spreads out into Place Royal and Palace Forecourt; yonder is the *Salle des Menus*. Yonder an august Assembly sits regenerating France. Forecourt, Grand Court, Court of Marble, Court narrowing into Court you may discern next, or fancy: on the extreme verge of which that glass-dome, visibly glittering like a star of hope, is the — *Œil-de-Bœuf*! Yonder, or nowhere in the world, is bread baked for us. But, O Mesdames, were not one thing good: That our cannons, with Demoiselle Théroigne and all show of war, be put to the rear? Submission beseems petitioners of a National Assembly; we are strangers in Versailles, — whence, too audibly, there

comes even now a sound as of tocsin and *générale!*¹ Also to put on, if possible, a cheerful countenance, hiding our sorrows; and even to sing? Sorrow, pitied of the Heavens, is hateful, suspicious to the Earth. — So counsels shifty Maillard; haranguing his Menads, on the heights near Versailles.

Cunning Maillard's dispositions are obeyed. The draggled Insurrectionists advance up the Avenue, "in three columns," among the four Elm-rows; "singing *Henri Quatre*," with what melody they can; and shouting *Vive le Roi*. Versailles, though the Elm-rows are dripping wet, crowds from both sides, with "*Vivent nos Parisiennes*, Our Paris ones for ever!"

Prickers, scouts have been sent out towards Paris, as the rumour deepened: whereby his Majesty, gone to shoot in the Woods of Meudon, has been happily discovered, and got home; and the *générale* and tocsin set a-sounding. The Bodyguards are already drawn up in front of the Palace Grates; and look down the Avenue de Versailles; sulky, in wet buckskins. Flandre too is there, repentant of the Opera-Repast. Also Dragoons dismounted are there. Finally Major Lecointre, and what he can gather of the Versailles National Guard; — though it is to be observed, our Colonel, that same sleepless Count d'Estaing, giving neither order nor ammunition, has vanished most improperly; one supposes, into the Œil-de-Bœuf. Red-coated Swiss stand within the Grates, under arms. There likewise, in their inner room, "all the Ministers," Saint-Priest, Lamentation Pompignan and the rest, are assembled with M. Necker: they sit with him there; blank, expecting what the hour will bring.

President Mounier, though he answered Mirabeau with a *tant mieux*, and affected to slight the matter, had his own forebodings. Surely, for these four weary hours he has reclined not on roses! The order of the day is getting forward: a Deputation to his Majesty seems proper, that it might please him to grant "Acceptance pure and simple" to those

¹ The call to assembly or to arms.

Constitution Articles of ours;¹ the "mixed qualified Acceptance," with its peradventures, is satisfactory to neither gods nor men.

So much is clear. And yet there is more, which no man speaks, which all men now vaguely understand. Disquietude, absence of mind is on every face; Members whisper, uneasily come and go; the order of the day is evidently not the day's want. Till at length, from the outer gates, is heard a rustling and justling, shrill uproar and squabbling, muffled by walls; which testifies that the hour is come! Rushing and crushing one hears now; then enter Usher Maillard, with a Deputation of Fifteen muddy dripping Women, — having, by incredible industry, and aid of all the macers, persuaded the rest to wait out of doors. National Assembly shall now, therefore, look its august task directly in the face: regenerative Constitutionalism has an unregenerate Sansculottism bodily in front of it; crying, "Bread! Bread!"

Shifty Maillard, translating frenzy into articulation; repressive with the one hand, expostulative with the other, does his best; and really, though not bred to public speaking, manages rather well: — In the present dreadful rarity of grains, a Deputation of Female Citizens has, as the august Assembly can discern, come out from Paris to petition. Plots of Aristocrats are too evident in the matter; for example, one miller has been bribed "by a bank-note of 200 livres" not to grind, — name unknown to the Usher, but fact provable, at least indubitable. Further, it seems, the National Cockade has been trampled on; also there are Black Cockades, or were. All which things will not an august National Assembly, the hope of France, take into its wise immediate consideration?

And Menadic Hunger, irrepressible, crying "Black Cockades," crying "Bread, bread," adds, after such fashion: Will it not? — Yes, Messieurs, if a Deputation to his Majesty, for the "Acceptance pure and simple," seemed proper, —

¹ Articles had been drawn up to serve as a basis for the projected constitution; they limited the royal power and Louis refused to grant unequivocal approval.

how much more now, for "the afflicting situation of Paris"; for the calming of this effervescence! President Mounier, with a speedy Deputation, among whom we notice the respectable figure of Doctor Guillotin, gets himself forthwith on march. Vice-President shall continue the order of the day; Usher Maillard shall stay by him to repress the women. It is four o'clock, of the miserablest afternoon, when Mounier steps out.

O experienced Mounier, what an afternoon; the last of thy political existence! Better had it been to "fall suddenly unwell," while it was yet time. For, behold, the Esplanade, over all its spacious expanse, is covered with groups of squalid dripping Women; of lankhaired male Rascality, armed with axes, rusty pikes, old muskets, ironshod clubs (*batons ferrés*, which end in knives or sword-blades, a kind of extempore billhook); — looking nothing but hungry revolt. The rain pours: Gardes-du-Corps go caracoling through the groups "amid hisses"; irritating and agitating what is but dispersed here to reunite there.

Innumerable squalid women beleaguer the President and Deputation; insist on going with him: has not his Majesty himself, looking from the window, sent out to ask, What we wanted? "Bread, and speech with the King (*Du pain, et parler au Roi*)," that was the answer. Twelve women are clamorously added to the Deputation; and march with it, across the Esplanade; through dissipated groups, caracoling Bodyguards and the pouring rain.

President Mounier, unexpectedly augmented by Twelve women, copiously escorted by Hunger and Rascality, is himself mistaken for a group; himself and his women are dispersed by caracolers; rally again with difficulty, among the mud. Finally the Grates are opened; the Deputation gets access, with the Twelve women too in it; of which latter, Five shall even see the face of his Majesty. Let wet Menadism, in the best spirits it can, expect their return.

CHAPTER VII

AT VERSAILLES

BUT already Pallas Athene (in the shape of Demoiselle Théroigne) is busy with Flandre and the dismounted Dragoons. She, and such women as are fittest, go through the ranks; speak with an earnest jocosity; clasp rough troopers to their patriot bosom, crush down spontoons and musketoons with soft arms: can a man, that were worthy of the name of man, attack famishing patriot women?

One reads that Théroigne had bags of money, which she distributed over Flandre: — furnished by whom? Alas, with money-bags one seldom sits on insurrectionary cannon. Calumnious Royalism! Théroigne had only the limited earnings of her profession of unfortunate-female; money she had not, but brown locks, the figure of a Heathen Goddess and an eloquent tongue and heart. . . .

Behold, however, the Twelve She-deputies return from the Château. Without President Mounier, indeed; but radiant with joy, shouting "*Life to the King and his House.*" Apparently the news are good, Mesdames? News of the best! Five of us were admitted to the internal splendours, to the Royal Presence. This slim damsel, "Louison Chabray, worker in sculpture, aged only seventeen," as being of the best looks and address, her we appointed speaker. On whom, and indeed on all of us, his Majesty looked nothing but graciousness. Nay, when Louison, addressing him, was like to faint, he took her in his royal arms; and said gallantly, "It was well worth while (*Elle en valût bien la peine.*)" Consider, O Women, what a King! His words were of comfort, and that only: there shall be provision sent to Paris, if provision is in the world; grains shall circulate free as air; millers shall grind, or do worse, while their millstones endure; and nothing be left wrong which a Restorer of French Liberty can right.

Good news these; but, to wet Menads, all-too incredible! There seems no proof, then? *Words* of comfort, — they are

words only; which will feed nothing. O miserable People, betrayed by Aristocrats, who corrupt thy very messengers! In his royal arms, Mademoiselle Louison? In his arms? Thou shameless minx, worthy of a name — that shall be nameless! Yes, thy skin is soft: ours is rough with hardship; and well wetted, waiting here in the rain. No children hast thou hungry at home; only alabaster dolls, that weep not! The traitress! To the Lanterne—! And so poor Louison Chabray, no asseveration or shrieks availing her, fair slim damsel, late in the arms of Royalty, has a garter round her neck, and furibund Amazons at each end; is about to perish so, — when two Bodyguards gallop up, indignantly dissipating; and rescue her. The miscredited Twelve hasten back to the Château, for an “answer in writing.” . . .

CHAPTER VIII

THE EQUAL DIET

BUT why lingers Mounier; returns not with his Deputation? It is six, it is seven o'clock; and still no Mounier, no Acceptance pure and simple.

And, behold, the dripping Menads, not now in deputation but in mass, have penetrated into the Assembly: to the shamefullest interruption of public speaking and order of the day. Neither Maillard nor Vice-President can restrain them, except within wide limits; not even, except for minutes, can the lion-voice of Mirabeau, though they applaud it: but ever and anon they break in upon the regeneration of France with cries of: “Bread; not so much discoursing! *Du pain; pas tant de longs discours!*”—So insensible were these poor creatures to bursts of parliamentary eloquence!

. . . So sink the shadows of night, blustering, rainy; and all paths grow dark. Strangest Night ever seen in these regions, — perhaps since the Bartholomew Night, when Versailles, as Bassompierre writes of it, was a *chétif château*. O for the Lyre of some Orpheus, to constrain, with touch of melodious strings, these mad masses into Order! For here all seems fallen asunder, in wide-yawning dislocation. The

highest, as in down-rushing of a World, is come in contact with the lowest: the Rascality of France beleaguering the Royalty of France; "ironshod batons" lifted round the diadem, not to guard it! With denunciations of bloodthirsty Anti-national Bodyguards, are heard dark growlings against a Queenly Name.

The Court sits tremulous, powerless; varies with the varying temper of the Esplanade, with the varying colour of the rumours from Paris. Thick-coming rumours; now of peace, now of war. Necker and all the Ministers consult; with a blank issue. The *Œil-de-Bœuf* is one tempest of whispers: — We will fly to Metz; we will not fly. The royal Carriages again attempt egress, — though for trial merely; they are again driven in by Lecointre's Patrols. In six hours, nothing has been resolved upon; not even the Acceptance pure and simple.

In six hours? Alas, he who, in such circumstances, cannot resolve in six minutes, may give up the enterprise: him Fate has already resolved for. And Menadism, meanwhile, and Sansculottism takes counsel with the National Assembly; grows more and more tumultuous there. Mounier returns not; Authority nowhere shows itself: the Authority of France lies, for the present, with Lecointre and Usher Maillard. — This then is the abomination of desolation; come suddenly, though long foreshadowed as inevitable! For, to the blind, all things are sudden. Misery which, through long ages, had no spokesman, no helper, will now be its own helper and speak for itself. The dialect, one of the rudest, is, what it could be, *this*.

At eight o'clock there returns to our Assembly not the Deputation; but Doctor Guillotin announcing that it will return; also that there is hope of the Acceptance pure and simple. He himself has brought a Royal Letter, authorizing and commanding the freest "circulation of grains." Which Royal Letter Menadism with its whole heart applauds. Conformably to which the Assembly forthwith passes a Decree; also received with rapturous Menadic plaudits: — Only could not an august Assembly contrive further to "*fix*

the price of bread at eight sous the half-quartern; butchers'-meat at six sous the pound;" which seems fair rates? Such motion do "a multitude of men and women," irrepressible by Usher Maillard, now make; does an august Assembly hear made. Usher Maillard himself is not always perfectly measured in speech; but if rebuked, he can justly excuse himself by the peculiarity of the circumstances.

But finally, this Decree well passed, and the disorder continuing; and Members melting away, and no President Mounier returning, — what can the Vice-President do but also melt away? The Assembly melts, under such pressure, into deliquium; or, as it is officially called, adjourns. Maillard is dispatched to Paris, with the "Decree concerning Grains" in his pocket; he and some women, in carriages belonging to the King. Thitherward slim Louison Chabray has already set forth, with that "written answer" which Twelve She-deputies returned in to seek. Slim sylph, she has set forth, through the black muddy country: she has much to tell, her poor nerves so flurried; and travels, as indeed to-day on this road all persons do, with extreme slowness. President Mounier has not come, nor the Acceptance pure and simple; though six hours with their events have come; though courier on courier reports that Lafayette is coming. Coming, with war or with peace? It is time that the Château also should determine on one thing or another; that the Château also should show itself alive, if it would continue living!

Victorious, joyful after such delay, Mounier does arrive at last, and the hard-earned Acceptance with him; which now, alas, is of small value. Fancy Mounier's surprise to find his Senate, whom he hoped to charm by the Acceptance pure and simple, — all gone; and in its stead a Senate of Menads! For as Erasmus's Ape mimicked, say with wooden splint, Erasmus shaving, so do these Amazons hold, in mock majesty, some confused parody of National Assembly. They make motions; deliver speeches; pass enactments; productive at least of loud laughter. All galleries and benches are filled; a Strong Dame of the Market is in Mounier's

Chair. Not without difficulty, Mounier, by aid of macers and persuasive speaking, makes his way to the Female-President; the Strong Dame, before abdicating, signifies that, for one thing, she and indeed her whole senate male and female (for what was one roasted warhorse among so many?) are suffering very considerably from hunger.

Experienced Mounier, in these circumstances, takes a twofold resolution: To reconvoke his Assembly Members by sound of drum; also to procure a supply of food. Swift messengers fly, to all bakers, cooks, pastrycooks, vintners, restorers; drums beat, accompanied with shrill vocal proclamation, through all streets. They come: the Assembly Members come; what is still better, the provisions come. On tray and barrow come these latter; loaves, wine, great store of sausages. The nourishing baskets circulate harmoniously along the benches; *nor*, according to the Father of Epics, *did any soul lack a fair share of victual* (δαῖτος ἕσις, *an equal diet*); highly desirable at the moment.

Gradually some hundred or so of Assembly Members get edged in, Menadism making way a little, round Mounier's chair; listen to the Acceptance pure and simple; and begin, what is the order of the night "discussion of the Penal Code." All benches are crowded; in the dusky galleries, duskier with unwashed heads, is a strange "coruscation,"—of impromptu bill-hooks. It is exactly five months this day since these same galleries were filled with high-plumed jewelled Beauty, raining bright influences; and now? To such length have we got in regenerating France. Methinks the travail-throes are of the sharpest! — Menadism will not be restrained from occasional remarks; asks, "What is the use of Penal Code? The thing we want is Bread." Mirabeau turns round with lion-voiced rebuke; Menadism applauds him; but recommences.

Thus they, chewing tough sausages, discussing the Penal Code, make night hideous. What the issue will be? Lafayette with his thirty thousand must arrive first: him, who cannot now be distant, all men expect, as the messenger of Destiny.

CHAPTER IX

LAFAYETTE

TOWARDS midnight lights flare on the hill; Lafayette's lights! The roll of his drums comes up the Avenue de Versailles. With peace, or with war? Patience, friends! With neither. Lafayette is come, but not yet the catastrophe.

He has halted and harangued so often, on the march; spent nine hours on four leagues of road. At Montreuil, close on Versailles, the whole Host has to pause; and, with uplifted right hand, in the murk of Night, to these pouring skies, swear solemnly to respect the King's Dwelling; to be faithful to King and National Assembly. Rage is driven down out of sight, by the laggard march; the thirst of vengeance slaked in weariness and soaking clothes. Flandre is again drawn out under arms: but Flandre, grown so patriotic, now needs no "exterminating." The wayworn Battalions halt in the Avenue: they have, for the present, no wish so pressing as that of shelter and rest.

Anxious sits President Mounier; anxious the Château. There is a message coming from the Château, that M. Mounier would please to return thither with a fresh Deputation, swiftly; and so at least *unite* our two anxieties. Anxious Mounier does of himself send, meanwhile, to apprise the General that his Majesty has been so gracious as to grant us the Acceptance pure and simple. The General, with a small advance column, makes answer in passing; speaks vaguely some smooth words to the National President,—glances, only with the eye, at that so mixtiform National Assembly; then fares forward towards the Château. There are with him two Paris Municipals; they were chosen from the Three Hundred for that errand. He gets admittance through the locked and padlocked Grates, through sentries and ushers, to the Royal Halls.

The Court, male and female, crowds on his passage, to read their doom on his face; which exhibits, say Historians, a mixture "of sorrow, of fervour and valour," singular to

behold. The King, with Monsieur,¹ with Ministers and Marshals, is waiting to receive him: He "is come," in his highflown chivalrous way, "to offer his head for the safety of his Majesty's." The two Municipals state the wish of Paris: four things, of quite pacific tenor. First, that the honour of guarding his sacred person be conferred on patriot National Guards; — say, the Centre Grenadiers, who as Gardes Françaises were wont to have that privilege. Second, that provisions be got, if possible. Third, that the Prisons, all crowded with political delinquents, may have judges sent them. Fourth, *that it would please his Majesty to come and live in Paris.* To all which four wishes, except the fourth, his Majesty answered readily, Yes; or indeed may almost say that he has already answered it. To the fourth he can answer only, Yes or No; would so gladly answer, Yes *and* No! — But, in any case, are not their dispositions, thank Heaven, so entirely pacific? There is time for deliberation. The brunt of the danger seems past! . . .

CHAPTER X

THE GRAND ENTRIES

THE dull dawn of a new morning, drizzly and chill, had but broken over Versailles, when it pleased Destiny that a Bodyguard should look out of window, on the right wing of the Château, to see what prospect there was in Heaven and in Earth. Rascality male and female is prowling in view of him. His fasting stomach is, with good cause, sour; he perhaps cannot forbear a passing malison on them; least of all can he forbear answering such.

Ill words breed worse: till the worst word come; and then the ill deed. Did the maledicent Bodyguard, getting (as was inevitable) better malediction than he gave, load his musketoon, and threaten to fire; nay actually fire? Were wise who wist! It stands asserted; to us not credibly.

¹ "Monsieur" was the title given to the King's brother, Comte de Provence, who after the fall of Napoleon was destined to reign as Louis XVIII (1814-1825).

But be this as it may, menaced Rascality, in whinnying scorn, is shaking at all Grates: the fastening of one (some write, it was a chain merely) gives way; Rascality is in the Grand Court, whinnying louder still.

The maledicent Bodyguard, more Bodyguards than he do now give fire; a man's arm is shattered. Lecointre will depose that "the Sieur Cardine, a National Guard without arms, was stabbed." But see, sure enough, poor Jérôme l'Héritier, an unarmed National Guard he too, "cabinet-maker, a saddler's son of Paris," with the down of youthhood still on his chin, — he reels death-stricken; rushes to the pavement, scattering it with his blood and brains! — Allelu! Wilder than Irish wakes rises the howl; of pity, of infinite revenge. In few moments, the Grate of the inner and inmost Court, which they name Court of Marble, this too is forced, or surprised, and bursts open: the Court of Marble too is overflowed: up the Grand Staircase, up all stairs and entrances rushes the living deluge! Deshuttés and Varigny, the two sentry Bodyguards, are trodden down, are massacred with a hundred pikes. Women snatch their cutlasses, or any weapon, and storm-in Menadic: — other women lift the corpse of shot Jérôme; lay it down on the Marble steps; there shall the livid face and smashed head, dumb for ever, *speak*.

Woe now to all Bodyguards, mercy is none for them! Miomandre de Sainte-Marie pleads with soft words, on the Grand Staircase, "descending four steps": — to the roaring tornado. His comrades snatch him up, by the skirts and belts; literally, from the jaws of Destruction; and slam-to their Door. This also will stand few instants; the panels shivering in, like potsherds. Barricading serves not: fly fast, ye Bodyguards: rabid Insurrection, like the Hellhound Chase, uproaring at your heels!

The terror-struck Bodyguards fly, bolting and barricading; it follows. Whitherward? Through hall on hall: woe now! towards the Queen's Suite of Rooms, in the furthest room of which the Queen is now asleep. Five sentinels rush

through that long suite; they are in the Anteroom knocking loud: "Save the Queen!" Trembling women fall at their feet with tears: are answered: "Yes, we will die; save ye the Queen!"

Tremble not, women, but haste; for, lo, another voice shouts far through the outermost door, "Save the Queen!" and the door is shut. It is brave Miomandre's voice that shouts this second warning. He has stormed across imminent death to it; fronts imminent death, having done it. Brave Tardivet du Repaire, bent on the same desperate service, was borne down with pikes; his comrades hardly snatched him in again alive. Miomandre and Tardivet: let the names of these two Bodyguards, as the names of brave men should, live long.

Trembling Maids of Honour, one of whom from afar caught glimpse of Miomandre as well as heard him, hastily wrap the Queen; not in robes of state. She flies for her life, across the *Œil-de-Bœuf*; against the main door of which too Insurrection batters. She is in the King's Apartment, in the King's arms; she clasps her children amid a faithful few. The Imperial-hearted bursts into mother's tears: "O my friends, save me and my children, *O mes amis, sauvez moi et mes enfans!*" The battering of Insurrectionary axes clangs audible across the *Œil-de-Bœuf*. What an hour!

Yes, Friends; a hideous fearful hour; shameful alike to Governed and Governor; wherein Governed and Governor ignominiously testify that their relation is at an end. Rage, which had brewed itself in twenty thousand hearts for the last four-and-twenty-hours, has taken *fire*: Jérôme's brained corpse lies there as live-coal. It is, as we said, the infinite Element bursting in; wild-surfing through all corridors and conduits.

Meanwhile the poor Bodyguards have got hunted mostly into the *Œil-de-Bœuf*. They may die there, at the King's threshold; they can do little to defend it. They are heaping *tabourets* (stools of honour), benches and all movables, against the door; at which the axe of Insurrection thunders. . . .

And louder and louder rages Insurrection within, plundering if it cannot kill; louder and louder it thunders at the *Œil-de-Bœuf*: what can now hinder its bursting in? — On a sudden it ceases; the battering has ceased! Wild rushing; the cries grow fainter; there is silence, or the tramp of regular steps; then a friendly knocking: "We are the Centre Grenadiers, old Gardes Françaises: Open to us, Messieurs of the Garde-du-Corps; we have not forgotten how you saved us at Fontenoy!"¹ The door is opened; enter Captain Gondran and the Centre Grenadiers: there are military embracings; there is sudden deliverance from death into life. —

Strange Sons of Adam! It was to "exterminate" these Gardes-du-Corps that the Centre Grenadiers left home: and now they have rushed to save them from extermination. The memory of common peril, of old help, melts the rough heart; bosom is clasped to bosom, not in war. The King shows himself, one moment, through the door of his Apartment, with: "Do not hurt my Guards!" — "*Soyons frères*, Let us be brothers!" cries Captain Gondran; and again dashes off, with levelled bayonets, to sweep the Palace clear.

Now too Lafayette, suddenly roused, not from sleep (for his eyes had not yet closed), arrives; with passionate popular eloquence, with prompt military word of command. National Guards, suddenly roused, by sound of trumpet and alarm-drum, are all arriving. The death-melody ceases: the first sky-lambent blaze of Insurrection is got damped down; it burns now, if unextinguished, yet flameless, as charred coals do, and not inextinguishable. The King's Apartments are safe. Ministers, Officials, and even some loyal National Deputies are assembling round their Majesties. The consternation will, with sobs and confusion, settle down gradually, into plan and counsel, better or worse.

But glance now, for a moment, from the royal windows! A roaring sea of human heads, inundating both Courts; billowing against all passages: Menadic women; infuriated

¹ A battle fought in Belgium (1745), during the war of the Austrian succession, in which the French defeated the English and Austrians.

men, mad with revenge, with love of mischief, love of plunder! Rascality has slipped its muzzle; and now bays, three-throated, like the Dog of Erebus. Fourteen Bodyguards are wounded; two massacred, and as we saw, beheaded; Jourdan asking, "Was it worth while to come so far for two?" Hapless Deshuttés and Varigny! Their fate surely was sad. Whirled down so suddenly to the abyss; as men are, suddenly, by the wide thunder of the Mountain Avalanche, awakened not by *them*, awakened far off by others! When the Château Clock last struck, they two were pacing languid, with poised musketoon; anxious mainly that the next hour would strike. It has struck; to them inaudible. Their trunks lie mangled: their heads parade, "on pikes twelve feet long," through the streets of Versailles; and shall, about noon, reach the Barriers of Paris, — a too ghastly contradiction to the large comfortable Placards that have been posted there! . . .

Now too is witnessed the touching last-flicker of Etiquette; which sinks not here, in the Cimmerian World-wreckage, without a sign; as the house-cricket might still chirp in the pealing of a Trump of Doom. "Monsieur," said some Master of Ceremonies (one hopes it might be De Brézé), as Lafayette, in these fearful moments, was rushing towards the inner Royal Apartments, "*Monsieur, le Roi vous accorde les grandes entrées*, Monsieur, the King grants you the Grand Entries," — not finding it convenient to refuse them!

CHAPTER XI

FROM VERSAILLES

HOWEVER, the Paris National Guard, wholly under arms, has cleared the Palace, and even occupies the nearer external spaces; extruding miscellaneous Patriotism, for most part, into the Grand Court, or even into the Forecourt.

The Bodyguards, you can observe, have now of a verity "hoisted the National Cockade:" for they step forward to the windows or balconies, hat aloft in hand, on each hat a huge tricolor; and fling over their bandoleers in sign of surrender; and shout *Vive le Nation*. To which how can the

generous heart respond but with, *Vive le Roi; vivent les Gardes-du-Corps?* His Majesty himself has appeared with Lafayette on the balcony, and again appears: *Vive le Roi* greets him from all throats; but also from some one throat is heard, "*Le Roi à Paris, The King to Paris!*"

Her Majesty too, on demand, shows herself, though there is peril in it: she steps out on the balcony, with her little boy and girl. "No children, *Point d'enfants!*" cry the voices. She gently pushes back her children; and stands alone, her hands serenely crossed on her breast: "should I die," she had said, "I will do it." Such serenity of heroism has its effect. Lafayette, with ready wit, in his highflown chivalrous way, takes that fair queenly hand, and, reverently kneeling, kisses it: thereupon the people do shout *Vive la Reine*. Nevertheless poor Weber "saw" (or even thought he saw; for hardly the third part of poor Weber's experiences, in such hysterical days, will stand scrutiny) "one of these brigands level his musket at her Majesty," — with or without intention to shoot; for another of the brigands "angrily struck it down."

So that all, and the Queen herself, nay the very Captain of the Bodyguards, have grown National! The very Captain of the Bodyguards steps out now with Lafayette. On the hat of the repentant man is an enormous tricolor; large as a soup-platter, or sunflower; visible to the utmost Forecourt. He takes the National Oath with a loud voice, elevating his hat; at which sight all the army raise their bonnets on their bayonets, with shouts. Sweet is reconciliation to the heart of man. Lafayette has sworn Flandre; he swears the remaining Bodyguards, down in the Marble-Court; the people clasp them in their arms: — O my brothers, why would ye force us to slay you? Behold there is joy over you, as over returning prodigal sons! — The poor Bodyguards, now National and tricolor, exchange bonnets, exchange arms; there shall be peace and fraternity. And still "*Vive le Roi;*" and also "*Le Roi à Paris,*" not now from one throat, but from all throats as one, for it is the heart's wish of all mortals. . . .

And thus has Sansculottism made prisoner its King; *revoking* his parole. The Monarchy has fallen; and not so much as honourably: no, ignominiously; with struggle, indeed, oft-repeated; but then with unwise struggle, wasting its strength in fits and paroxysms; at every new paroxysm foiled more pitifully than before. Thus Broglie's whiff of grapeshot, which might have been something, has dwindled to the pot-valour of an Opera Repast, and *O Richard, O mon Roi*. Which again we shall see dwindle to a Favras' Conspiracy, a thing to be settled by the hanging of one Chevalier. . . .

Now, however, the short hour has struck. His Majesty is in his carriage, with his Queen, sister Elizabeth, and two royal children. Not for another hour can the infinite Procession get marshalled and under way. The weather is dim drizzling; the mind confused; the noise great.

Processional marches not a few our world has seen; Roman triumphs and ovations, Cabiric cymbal-beatings, Royal progresses, Irish funerals; but this of the French Monarchy marching to its bed remained to be seen. Miles long, and of breadth losing itself in vagueness, for all the neighbouring country crowds to see. Slow; stagnating along, like shoreless Lake, yet with a noise like Niagara, like Babel and Bedlam. A splashing and a tramping; a hurraing, up-roaring, musket-volleying; — the truest segment of Chaos seen in these latter Ages! Till slowly it disembody itself, in the thickening dusk, into expectant Paris, through a double row of faces all the way from Passy to the Hôtel-de-Ville.

Consider this: Vanguard of National troops; with trains of artillery; of pikemen and pikewomen, mounted on canons, on carts, hackney-coaches, or on foot; — tripudiating, in tricolor ribbons from head to heel; loaves stuck on the points of bayonets, green boughs stuck in gun-barrels. Next, as main-march, "fifty cart-loads of corn," which have been lent, for peace, from the stores of Versailles. Behind which follow stragglers of the Garde-du-Corps; all humiliated, in Grenadier bonnets. Close on these comes the Royal Car-

riage; come Royal Carriages: for there are a hundred National Deputies too, among whom sits Mirabeau, — his remarks not given. Then finally, pellmell, as rearguard, Flandre, Swiss, Hundred Swiss, other Bodyguards, Brigands, whosoever cannot get before. Between and among all which masses, flows without limit Saint-Antoine, and the Menadic Cohort. Menadic especially about the Royal Carriage; tripudiating there, covered with tricolor; singing "allusive songs;" pointing with one hand to the Royal Carriage, which the allusions hit, and pointing to the Provision wagons with the other hand, and these words: "Courage, Friends! We shall not want bread now; we are bringing you the Baker, the Bakeress, and Baker's Boy (*le Boulanger, la Boulangère, et le petit Mitron*)."

The wet day draggles the tricolor, but the joy is unextinguishable. Is not all well now? "*Ah, Madame, notre bonne Reine*," said some of these Strong-women some days hence, "Ah Madame, our good Queen, don't be a traitor any more (*ne soyez plus traître*), and we will all love you!" Poor Weber went splashing along, close by the Royal carriage, with the tear in his eye: "their Majesties did me the honour," or I thought they did it, "to testify, from time to time, by shrugging of the shoulders, by looks directed to Heaven, the emotions they felt." Thus, like frail cockle, floats the royal Life-boat, helmless, on black deluges of Rascality.

Mercier, in his loose way, estimates the Procession and assistants at two hundred thousand. He says it was one boundless inarticulate Haha; — *transcendent* World-Laughter; comparable to the Saturnalia of the Ancients. Why not? Here too, as we said, is Human Nature once more human; shudder at it whoso is of shuddering humour: yet behold it is human. It has "swallowed all formulas"; it tripudiates even so. For which reason they that collect Vases and Antiques, with figures of Dancing Bacchantes "in wild and all but impossible positions," may look with some interest on it.

Thus, however, has the slow-moving Chaos, or modern

Saturnalia of the Ancients, reached the Barrier; and must halt, to be harangued by Mayor Bailly. Thereafter it has to lumber along, between the double row of faces, in the transcendent heaven-lashing Haha; two hours longer, towards the Hôtel-de-Ville. Then again to be harangued there, by several persons; by Moreau de Saint-Méry among others; Moreau of the Three-thousand orders, now National Deputy for St. Domingo. To all which poor Louis, "who seemed to experience a slight emotion" on entering this Townhall, can answer only that he "comes with pleasure, with confidence among his people." Mayor Bailly, in reporting it, forgets "confidence:" and the poor Queen says eagerly: "Add, with confidence." — "Messieurs," rejoins Mayor Bailly, "you are happier than if I had not forgotten."

Finally, the King is shown on an upper balcony, by torchlight, with a huge tricolor in his hat: "and all the people," says Weber, "grasped one another's hand"; — thinking *now* surely the New Era was born. Hardly till eleven at night can Royalty get to its vacant, long deserted Palace of the Tuileries; to lodge there, somewhat in strolling-player fashion. It is Tuesday the sixth of October 1789.

Poor Louis has Two other Paris Processions to make — one ludicrous-ignominious like this; the other not ludicrous nor ignominious, but serious, nay sublime.

[The eighteen months which followed the capture of the king by the people of Paris were chiefly filled with the business of making a Constitution. For a time it seemed as though the Revolution would be accomplished peacefully. Many of the irreconcilable adherents of the old régime emigrated from France in the autumn of 1789; those that remained contented themselves with a war of epigrams upon the popular aspirations. The King and Queen, outwardly at least, accepted the limitation of their power. The visible symbol of general concord and rejoicing in the new era of liberty and brotherhood was the Feast of Federation, which was held on the first anniversary of the capture of the Bastille.

But this period of confidence and optimism was brief. Anarchy and disorganization were in the government and in the army; suspicion of the sincerity of the king constantly increased; a mutiny in the army at Nanci was suppressed severely, to the irritation of popular feeling. Moreover the attempts of the Assembly to discover a mean between royal absolutism and popular sovereignty aroused the discontent of both king and people.

Mirabeau was the sole person capable of stemming the rising tide of disorder. Obstinate in his defense of popular rights, he recognized at the same time the necessity of preserving the independence of royal authority, if anarchy was to be avoided. He planned to carry the king to Rouen where he would be independent of the Paris mob. There he believed it possible to set up a government in which a strong executive might combine with a popular assembly to produce a firm and yet liberal administration. But Mirabeau never held the perfect confidence of Louis or of the queen; and in the opening months of 1791 his physical health declined rapidly.]

BOOK III

THE TUILERIES

CHAPTER VI

MIRABEAU

... Dim and great to the eye of Prophecy looks that future. A perpetual life-and-death battle; confusion from above and from below; — mere confused darkness for us; with here and there some streak of faint lurid light. We see a King perhaps laid aside; not tonsured, tonsuring is out of fashion now; but say, sent away anywhither, with handsome annual allowance, and stock of smith-tools. We see a Queen and Dauphin, Regent and Minor; a Queen “mounted on horseback,” in the din of battles, with *Moriamur pro rege nostro!* “Such a day,” Mirabeau writes, “may come.”

Din of battles, wars more than civil, confusion from above and from below: in such environment the eye of Prophecy sees Comte de Mirabeau, like some Cardinal de Retz,¹ stormfully maintain himself; with head all-devising, heart all-daring, if not victorious, yet unvanquished, while life is left him. The specialties and issues of it, no eye of Prophecy can guess at: it is clouds, we repeat, and tempestuous night; and in the middle of it, now visible, far-darting, now labouring in eclipse, is Mirabeau indomitably struggling to be

¹ Cardinal de Retz (1614-1679), the chief leader of the Fronde revolt, who by his adroitness and courage made himself the idol of the Paris bourgeoisie.

Cloud-Compeller! — One can say that, had Mirabeau lived, the History of France and of the World had been different. Further, that the man would have needed, as few men ever did, the whole compass of that same “Art of Daring, *Art d’Oser*,” which he so prized; and likewise that he, above all men then living, would have practised and manifested it. Finally, that some substantiality, and no empty simulacrum of a formula, would have been the result realized by him: a result you could have loved, a result you could have hated; by no likelihood, a result you could only have rejected with closed lips, and swept into quick forgetfulness for ever. Had Mirabeau lived one other year!

CHAPTER VII

DEATH OF MIRABEAU

BUT Mirabeau could not live another year, any more than he could live another thousand years. Men’s years are numbered, and the tale of Mirabeau’s was now complete. Important or unimportant; to be mentioned in World-History for some centuries, or not to be mentioned there beyond a day or two, — it matters not to peremptory Fate. From amid the press of ruddy busy Life, the Pale Messenger beckons silently: wide-spreading interests, projects, salvation of French Monarchies, what thing soever man has on hand, he must suddenly quit it all and go. Wert thou saving French Monarchies; wert thou blacking shoes on the Pont Neuf! The most important of men cannot stay; did the World’s History depend on an hour, that hour is not to be given. Whereby, indeed, it comes that these same *would-have-beens* are mostly a vanity; and the World’s History could never in the least be what it would, or might, or should, by any manner of potentiality, but simply and altogether what it *is*.

The fierce wear and tear of such an existence has wasted out the giant oaken strength of Mirabeau. A fret and fever that keeps heart and brain on fire: excess of effort,

of excitement; excess of all kinds: labour incessant, almost beyond credibility! "If I had not lived with him," says Dumont, "I never should have known what a man can make of one day; what things may be placed within the interval of twelve hours. A day for this man was more than a week or a month is for others: the mass of things he guided on together was prodigious; from the scheming to the executing not a moment lost." — "Monsieur le Comte," said his Secretary to him once, "what you require is impossible." — "Impossible!" — answered he, starting from his chair, "*Ne me dites jamais ce bête de mot*, Never name to me that block-head of a word." And then the social repasts; the dinner which he gives as Commandant of National Guards, which "cost five hundred pounds;" alas, and "the Sirens of the Opera;" and all the ginger that is hot in the mouth: — down what a course is this man hurled! Cannot Mirabeau stop; cannot he fly, and save himself alive? No! There is a Nessus' Shirt on this Hercules; he must storm and burn there, without rest, till he be consumed. Human strength, never so Herculean, has its measure. Herald shadows flit pale across the fire-brain of Mirabeau; heralds of the pale repose. While he tosses and storms, straining every nerve, in that sea of ambition and confusion, there comes, sombre and still, a monition that for him the issue of it will be swift death.

In January last, you might see him as President of the Assembly; "his neck wrapt in linen cloths, at the evening session:" there was sick heat of the blood, alternate darkening and flashing in the eyesight; he had to apply leeches, after the morning labour, and preside bandaged. "At parting he embraced me," says Dumont, "with an emotion I had never seen in him: 'I am dying, my friend; dying as by slow fire; we shall perhaps not meet again. When I am gone, they will know what the value of me was. The miseries I have held back will burst from all sides on France.'" Sick-ness gives louder warning; but cannot be listened to. On the 27th day of March, proceeding towards the Assembly, he had to seek rest and help in Friend de Lamarck's by the

road; and lay there, for an hour, half-fainted, stretched on a sofa. To the Assembly nevertheless he went, as if in spite of Destiny itself; spoke, loud and eager, five several times; then quitted the Tribune — for ever. He steps out, utterly exhausted, into the Tuileries Gardens; many people press round him, as usual, with applications, memorials; he says to the Friend who was with him: "Take me out of this!"

And so, on the last day of March 1791, endless anxious multitudes beset the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin; incessantly inquiring; within doors there, in that House numbered, in our time, 42, the overwearyed giant has fallen down, to die. Crowds of all parties and kinds; of all ranks from the King to the meanest man! The King sends publicly twice a day to inquire; privately besides: from the world at large there is no end of inquiring. "A written bulletin is handed out every three hours," is copied and circulated; in the end, it is printed. The People spontaneously keep silence; no carriage shall enter with its noise; there is crowding pressure; but the Sister of Mirabeau is reverently recognized, and has free way made for her. The People stand mute, heart-stricken; to all it seems as if a great calamity were nigh: as if the last man of France, who could have swayed these coming troubles, lay there at hand-grips with the unearthly Power.

The silence of a whole People, the wakeful toil of Cabanis, Friend and Physician, skills not: on Saturday, the second day of April, Mirabeau feels that the last of the Days has risen for him; that on this day he has to depart and be no more. His death is Titanic, as his life has been! Lit up, for the last time, in the glare of coming dissolution, the mind of the man is all glowing and burning; utters itself in sayings, such as men long remember. He longs to live, yet acquiesces in death, argues not with the inexorable. His speech is wild and wondrous: unearthly Phantasms dancing now their torch-dance round his soul; the soul itself looking out, fire-radiant, motionless, girt together for that great hour! At times comes a beam of light from him on the world he is quitting. "I carry in my heart the death-

dirge of the French Monarchy: the dead remains of it will now be the spoil of the factious." Or again, when he heard the cannon fire, what is characteristic too: "Have we the Achilles' Funeral already?" So likewise, while some friend is supporting him: "Yes, support that head; would I could bequeath it thee!" For the man dies as he has lived; self-conscious, conscious of a world looking on. He gazes forth on the young Spring, which for him will never be Summer. The Sun has risen; he says, "*Si ce n'est pas là Dieu, c'est du moins son cousin germain.*"¹ — Death has mastered the outworks; power of speech is gone; the citadel of the heart still holding out: the moribund giant, passionately, by sign, demands paper and pen; writes his passionate demand for opium, to end these agonies. The sorrowful Doctor shakes his head: *Dormir*, "To sleep," writes the other, passionately pointing at it! So dies a gigantic Heathen and Titan; stumbling blindly, undismayed, down to his rest. At half-past eight in the morning, Doctor Petit, standing at the foot of the bed, says, "*Il ne souffre plus.*" His suffering and his working are now ended.

Even so, ye silent Patriot multitudes, all ye men of France; this man is rapt away from you. He has fallen suddenly, without bending till he broke; as a tower falls, smitten by sudden lightning. His word ye shall hear no more, his guidance follow no more.—The multitudes depart, heart-struck; spread the sad tidings. How touching is the loyalty of men to their Sovereign Man! All theatres, public amusements close; no joyful meeting can be held in these nights, joy is not for them: the People break in upon private dancing-parties, and sullenly command that they cease. Of such dancing-parties apparently but two came to light; and these also have gone out. The gloom is universal; never in this City was such sorrow for one death; never since that old night when Louis XII departed, "and the *Crieurs des Corps* went sounding their bells, and crying along the streets: *Le bon roi Louis, père du peuple, est mort*, The good King Louis, Father of the People, is dead!" King Mirabeau is now the

¹ "If God is not there, at least it is his second cousin."

lost King; and one may say with little exaggeration, all the People mourns for him.

For three days there is low wide moan; weeping in the National Assembly itself. The streets are all mournful; orators mounted on the *bornes*,¹ with large silent audience, preaching the funeral sermon of the dead. Let no coachman whip fast, distractively with his rolling wheels, or almost at all, through these groups! His traces may be cut; himself and his fare, as incurable Aristocrats, hurled sulkily into the kennels. The bourne-stone orators speak as it is given them; the Sansculottic People, with its rude soul, listens eager, — as men will to any Sermon, or *Sermo*, when it is a spoken Word meaning a Thing, and not a Babblement meaning No-thing. In the Restaurateur's of the Palais-Royal, the waiter remarks, "Fine weather, Monsieur:" — "Yes, my friend," answers the ancient Man of Letters, "very fine; but Mirabeau is dead." Hoarse rhythmic threnodies come also from the throats of ballad-singers; are sold on grey-white paper at a *sou* each. But of Portraits, engraved, painted, hewn and written; of Eulogies, Reminiscences, Biographies, nay *Vaudevilles*, Dramas and Melodramas, in all Provinces of France, there will, through these coming months, be the due immeasurable crop; thick as the leaves of spring. Nor, that a tincture of burlesque might be in it, is Gobel's Episcopal *Mandement* wanting; goose Gobel,² who has just been made Constitutional Bishop of Paris. A Mandement wherein *Ça ira*³ alternates very strangely with *Nomine Domini*; and you are, with a grave countenance, invited to "rejoice at possessing in the midst

¹ Stones set into the corners of buildings, and jutting out into the street.

² J. B. Gobel (1727-1794), a deputy of the clergy, who because of his approval of the civil constitution of the clergy — which most of the priests refused to accept — became enormously popular. He later resigned his episcopal functions, was suspected of atheism, and because he interfered with the plans of Robespierre, was guillotined.

³ A revolutionary song which later acquired a rather sinister connotation, since it was sung while the condemned were on their way to the guillotine.

of you a body of Prelates created by Mirabeau, zealous followers of his doctrine, faithful imitators of his virtues." So speaks, and cackles manifold, the Sorrow of France; wailing articulately, inarticulately, as it can, that a Sovereign Man is snatched away. In the National Assembly, when difficult questions are astir, all eyes will "turn mechanically to the place where Mirabeau sat," — and Mirabeau is absent now.

On the third evening of the lamentation, the fourth of April, there is solemn Public Funeral; such as deceased mortal seldom had. Procession of a league in length; of mourners reckoned loosely at a hundred thousand. All roofs are thronged with onlookers, all windows, lamp-irons, branches of trees. "Sadness is painted on every countenance; many persons weep." There is double hedge of National Guards; there is National Assembly in a body; Jacobin Society,¹ and Societies; King's Ministers, Municipals, and all Notabilities, Patriot or Aristocrat. Bouillé is noticeable there, "with his hat on;" say, hat drawn over his brow, hiding many thoughts! Slow-wending, in religious silence, the Procession of a league in length, under the level sun-rays, for it is five o'clock, moves and marches: with its sable plumes; itself in a religious silence; but, by fits with the muffled roll of drums, by fits with some long-drawn wail of music, and strange new-clangour of trombones, and metallic dirge-voice; amid the infinite hum of men. In the Church of Saint-Eustache, there is funeral oration by Cerutti; and discharge of fire-arms, which "brings down pieces of the plaster." Thence, forward again to the Church of Sainte-Geneviève; which has been consecrated, by su-

¹ A club founded in 1789, which met in the library of the old Jacobin convent in Paris, and which opened its doors to all ardent supporters of the revolution. Originally moderate, the prevailing opinion in the club became more and more radical, until during the Terror the name became synonymous with the most extreme revolutionary fervor. The club exercised enormous influence throughout France by its organization of affiliated Jacobin societies in the provinces. The Paris club was finally closed in 1795, in the midst of the reaction that followed the death of Robespierre.

preme decree, on the spur of this time, into a Pantheon for the Great Men of the Fatherland, *Aux Grands Hommes la Patrie reconnaissante*. Hardly at midnight is the business done; and Mirabeau left in his dark dwelling: first tenant of that Fatherland's Pantheon.

Tenant, alas, who inhabits but at will, and shall be cast out. For, in these days of convulsion and dissection, not even the dust of the dead is permitted to rest. Voltaire's bones are, by and by, to be carried from their stolen grave in the Abbey of Scellières, to an eager *stealing* grave, in Paris his birth-city: all mortals processioning and perorating there; cars drawn by eight white horses, goadsters in classical costume, with fillets and wheat-ears enough; — though the weather is of the wettest. Evangelist Jean Jacques ¹ too, as is most proper, must be dug up from Ermenonville, and processioned, with pomp, with sensibility, to the Pantheon of the Fatherland. He and others: while again Mirabeau, we say, is cast forth from it, happily incapable of being replaced; and rests now, irrecoznizable, reburied hastily at dead of night "in the central part of the Churchyard Sainte-Catherine, in the Suburb Saint-Marceau," to be disturbed no further.

So blazes out, farseen, a Man's Life, and becomes ashes and a *caput mortuum*, in this World-Pyre, which we name French Revolution: not the first that consumed itself there; nor, by thousands and many millions, the last! A man who "had swallowed all formulas;" who, in these strange times and circumstances, felt called to live Titanically, and also to die so. As he, for his part, had swallowed all formulas, what Formula is there, never so comprehensive, that will express truly the *plus* and the *minus* of him, give us the accurate net-result of him? There is hitherto none such. Moralities not a few must shriek condemnatory over this Mirabeau; the Morality by which he could be judged has not yet got uttered in the speech of men. We will say this of him again: That he is a Reality and no Simulacrum; a living Son of Nature our general Mother; not a hollow Arti-

¹ See p. 91, note 1.

fice, and mechanism of Conventionalities, son of nothing, *brother* to nothing. In which little word, let the earnest man, walking sorrowful in a world mostly of "Stuffed Clothes-suits," that chatter and grin meaningless on him, quite *ghastly* to the earnest soul, — think what significance there is!

Of men who, in such sense, are alive, and see with eyes, the number is now not great: it may be well, if in this huge French Revolution itself, with its all-developing fury, we find some Three. Mortals driven rabid we find; sputtering the acriddest logic; baring their breast to the battle-hail, their neck to the guillotine: — of whom it is so painful to say that they too are still, in good part, manufactured Formalities, not Facts but Hearsays!

Honour to the strong man, in these ages, who has shaken himself loose of shams, and *is* something. For in the way of being *worthy*, the first condition surely is that one *be*. Let Cant cease, at all risks and at all cost: till Cant cease, nothing else can begin. Of human Criminals, in these centuries, writes the Moralist, I find but one unforgivable: the Quack. "Hateful to God," as divine Dante sings, "and to the Enemies of God,

*A Dio spiacente ed a' nemici sui!"*¹

But whoever will, with sympathy, which is the first essential towards insight, look at this questionable Mirabeau, may find that there lay verily in him, as the basis of all, a Sincerity, a great free Earnestness; nay call it Honesty, for the man did before all things see, with that clear flashing vision, into what *was*, into what existed as fact; and did, with his wild heart, follow that and no other. Whereby on what ways soever he travels and struggles, often enough falling, he is still a brother man. Hate him not; thou canst not hate him! Shining through such soil and tarnish, and now victorious effulgent, and oftenest struggling eclipsed, the light of genius itself is in this man; which was never yet

¹ Dante, *Inferno*, 3, 63.

base and hateful; but at worst was lamentable, lovable with pity. They say that he was ambitious, that he wanted to be Minister. It is most true. And was he not simply the one man in France who could have done any good as Minister? Not vanity alone, not pride alone; far from that! Wild burstings of affection were in this great heart; of fierce lightning, and soft dew of pity. So sunk bemired in wretchedest defacements, it may be said of him, like the Magdalen of old, that he loved much: his Father, the harshest of old crabbed men, he loved with warmth, with veneration. . . .

BOOK IV
VARENNES
CHAPTER I

EASTER AT SAINT-CLOUD

THE French Monarchy may now therefore be considered as, in all human probability, lost; as struggling henceforth in blindness as well as weakness, the last light of reasonable guidance having gone out. What remains of resources their poor Majesties will waste still further, in uncertain loitering and wavering. Mirabeau himself had to complain that they only gave him half confidence, and always had some plan within his plan. Had they fled frankly with him to Rouen or anywhither, long ago! They may fly now with chance immeasurably lessened; which will go on lessening towards absolute zero. Decide, O Queen; poor Louis can decide nothing: execute this Flight-project, or at least abandon it. Correspondence with Bouillé there has been enough; what profits consulting, and hypothesis, while all around is in fierce activity of practice? The Rustic sits waiting till the river run dry: alas, with you it is not a common river, but a Nile Inundation; snows melting in the unseen mountains; till all, and you where you sit, be submerged. . . .

Many things invite to flight: but probably this thing above all others, that it has become impossible! On the 15th of April, notice is given that his Majesty, who has suffered much from catarrh lately, will enjoy the Spring weather, for a few days, at Saint-Cloud.¹ Out at Saint Cloud? Wishing to celebrate his Easter, his *Pâques* or Pasch, there; with refractory Anti-Constitutional Dissidents?² —

¹ The royal palace, a few miles outside of Paris.

² The civil constitution of the clergy placed the Church under the control of the State. It was anathematized by the Pope, largely because

Wishing rather to make off for Compiègne, and thence to the Frontiers? As were, in good sooth, perhaps feasible, or would once have been; nothing but some two *chasseurs* attending you; chasseurs easily corrupted! It is a pleasant possibility, execute it or not. Men say there are thirty thousand Chevaliers of the Poniard lurking in the woods there: lurking in the woods, and thirty thousand, — for the human Imagination is not fettered. But now, how easily might these, dashing out on Lafayette, snatch off the Hereditary Representative; and roll away with him, after the manner of a whirlblast, whither they listed! — Enough, it were well the King did not go. Lafayette is forewarned and forearmed: but, indeed, is the risk his only; or his and all France's?

Monday the eighteenth of April is come; the Easter Journey to Saint-Cloud shall take effect. National Guard has got its orders; a First Division, as Advanced Guard, has even marched, and probably arrived. His Majesty's *Maison-bouche*, they say, is all busy stewing and frying at Saint-Cloud; the King's dinner not far from ready there. About one o'clock, the Royal Carriage, with its eight royal blacks, shoots stately into the Place du Carrousel; draws up to receive its royal burden. But hark! from the neighbouring Church of Saint-Roch, the tocsin begins ding-dong-ing. Is the King stolen then; is he going; gone? Multitudes of persons crowd the Carrousel: the Royal Carriage still stands there; — and, by Heaven's strength, shall stand!

Lafayette comes up, with aides-de-camp and oratory; pervading the groups: "*Taisez-vous*," answer the groups, "the King shall not go." Monsieur appears, at an upper window: ten thousand voices bray and shriek, "*Nous ne voulons pas que le Roi parte*."¹ Their Majesties have mounted. Crack go the whips; but twenty Patriot arms have seized each of the eight bridles: there is rearing, rock-

bishops were to be elected by the people, who might vote whether or not they were good Catholics. A great number of priests obeyed the injunction of the Pope and refused to accept the constitution.

¹ "We will not have the King leave."

ing, vociferation; not the smallest headway. In vain does Lafayette fret, indignant; and perorate and strive: Patriots in the passion of terror bellow round the Royal Carriage; it is one bellowing sea of Patriot terror run frantic. Will Royalty fly off towards Austria; like a lit rocket, towards endless Conflagration of Civil War? Stop it, ye Patriots, in the name of Heaven! Rude voices passionately apostrophize Royalty itself. Usher Campan, and other the like official persons, pressing forward with help or advice, are clutched by the sashes, and hurled and whirled, in a confused perilous manner; so that her Majesty has to plead passionately from the carriage-window.

Order cannot be heard, cannot be followed; National Guards know not how to act. Centre Grenadiers, of the Observatoire Battalion, are there; not on duty; alas, in quasi-mutiny; speaking rude disobedient words; threatening the mounted Guards with sharp shot if they hurt the people. Lafayette mounts and dismounts; runs haranguing, panting; on the verge of despair. For an hour and three-quarters; "seven quarters of an hour," by the Tuileries Clock! Desperate Lafayette will open a passage, were it by the cannon's mouth, if his Majesty will order. Their Majesties, counselled to it by Royalist friends, by Patriot foes, dismount; and retire in, with heavy indignant heart; giving up the enterprise. *Maison-bouche*¹ may eat that cooked dinner themselves: his Majesty shall not see Saint-Cloud this day, — nor any day.

The pathetic fable of imprisonment in one's own Palace has become a sad fact, then? Majesty complains to Assembly; Municipality deliberates, proposes to petition or address; Sections respond with sullen brevity of negation. Lafayette flings down his Commission; appears in civic pepper-and-salt frock; and cannot be flattered back again; not in less than three days; and by unheard-of entreaty; National Guards kneeling to him, and declaring that it is not sycophancy, that they are free men kneeling here to the *Statue of Liberty*. For the rest, those Centre Grenadiers of

¹ See p. 59, note 1.

the Observatoire are disbanded, — yet indeed are reinlisted, all but fourteen, under a new name, and with new quarters. The King must keep his Easter in Paris; meditating much on this singular posture of things; but as good as determined now to fly from it, desire being whetted by difficulty.

CHAPTER III

COUNT FERSEN

ROYALTY, in fact, should, by this time, be far on with its preparations. Unhappily much preparation is needful. Could an Hereditary Representative be carried in leather-*vache*, how easy were it! But it is not so.

New Clothes are needed; as usual, in all Epic transactions, were it in the grimmest iron ages; consider “Queen Chrimhilde, with her sixty seamstresses,” in that iron *Nibelungen Song*! No Queen can stir without new clothes. Therefore, now, Dame Campan¹ whisks assiduous to this mantua-maker and to that: and there is clipping of frocks and gowns, upper clothes and under, great and small; such a clipping and sewing, as might have been dispensed with. Moreover, her Majesty cannot go a step anywhither without her *Nécessaire*; dear *Nécessaire*, of inlaid ivory and rose-wood; cunningly devised; which holds perfumes, toilette-implements, infinite small queenlike furnitures: necessary to terrestrial life. Not without a cost of some five hundred louis, of much precious time, and difficult hoodwinking which does not blind, can this same Necessary of life be forwarded by the Flanders Carriers,—never to get to hand. All which, you would say, augurs ill for the prospering of the enterprise. But the whims of women and queens must be humoured. . . .

We observe, however, that Count Fersen² is often using

¹ Madame Campan was lady-in-waiting to Marie Antoinette.

² Count Axel Fersen (1755-1810), a Swedish soldier who had fought on the American side at Yorktown, and was at this time acting as agent for the King of Sweden in France. A close friend of Marie Antoinette, he was anxious to liberate her and the court from the control of Paris.

his Ticket of Entry; which surely he has clear right to do. A gallant Soldier, and Swede, devoted to this fair Queen; — as indeed the Highest Swede now is. Has not King Gustav, famed fiery *Chevalier du Nord*, sworn himself, by the old laws of chivalry, her Knight? He will descend on fire-wings, of Swedish musketry, and deliver her from these foul dragons, — if, alas, the assassin's pistol intervene not!

But, in fact, Count Fersen does seem a likely young soldier, of alert decisive ways: he circulates widely, seen, unseen; and has business on hand. Also Colonel the Duke de Choiseul, nephew of Choiseul the great, of Choiseul the now deceased; he and Engineer Goguelat are passing and repassing between Metz and the Tuileries: and Letters go in cipher, — one of them, a most important one, hard to decipher; Fersen having ciphered it in haste. As for Duke de Villequier,¹ he is gone ever since the Day of Poniards; but his Apartment is useful for her Majesty.

On the other side, poor Commandant Gouvion, watching at the Tuileries, second in National command, sees several things hard to interpret. It is the same Gouvion who sat, long months ago, at the Townhall, gazing helpless into that Insurrection of Women; motionless, as the brave stabled steed when conflagration rises, till Usher Maillard snatched his drum. Sincerer Patriot there is not; but many a shiftier. He, if Dame Campan gossip credibly, is paying some similitude of love-court to a certain false Chambermaid of the Palace, who betrays much to him: the *Nécessaire*, the clothes, the packing of jewels, — could he understand it when betrayed. Helpless Gouvion gazes with sincere glassy eyes into it; stirs up his sentries to vigilance; walks restless to and fro; and hopes the best.

But, on the whole, one finds that, in the second week of June, Colonel de Choiseul is privately in Paris; having come "to see his children." Also that Fersen has got a stupendous new Coach built, of the kind named *Berline*; done by the

¹ L. M. A. Villequier, duc d'Aumont (1736-1814), one of the nobles chosen for the States-General, who soon resigned to devote himself entirely to his functions as first gentleman of the bed-chamber.

first artists; according to a model: they bring it home to him, in Choiseul's presence; the two friends take a proof-drive in it, along the streets; in meditative mood; then send it up to "Madame Sullivan's, in the Rue de Clichy," far North, to wait there till wanted. Apparently a certain Russian Baroness de Korff, with Waiting-woman, Valet, and two Children, will travel homewards with some state: in whom these young military gentlemen take interest? A Passport has been procured for her; and much assistance shown, with Coach-builders and such like: — so helpful-polite are young military men. Fersen has likewise purchased a Chaise fit for two, at least for two waiting-maids; further, certain necessary horses: one would say, he is himself quitting France, not without outlay? We observe finally that their Majesties, Heaven willing, will assist at *Corpus-Christi Day*, this blessed Summer Solstice, in Assumption Church, here at Paris, to the joy of all the world. For which same day, moreover, brave Bouillé, at Metz, as we find, has invited a party of friends to dinner; but indeed is gone from home, in the interim, over to Montmédi.

These are of the Phenomena, or visual Appearances, of this wide-working terrestrial world: which truly is all phenomenal, what they call spectral; and never sorts at any moment; one never at any moment can know why.

On Monday night, the Twentieth of June 1791, about eleven o'clock, there is many a hackney-coach, and glass-coach (*carrosse de remise*), still rumbling, or at rest, on the streets of Paris. But of all glass-coaches, we recommend this to thee, O Reader, which stands drawn up in the Rue de l'Echelle, hard by the Carrousel and out-gate of the Tuileries; in the Rue de l'Echelle that then was; "opposite Ronsin the saddler's door," as if waiting for a fare there! Not long does it wait: a hooded Dame, with two hooded Children, has issued from Villequier's door, where no sentry walks, into the Tuileries Court-of-Princes; into the Carrousel; into the Rue de l'Echelle; where the Glass-coachman readily admits them; and again waits. Not long; another Dame, likewise hooded or shrouded, leaning on a servant,

issues in the same manner; bids the servant good night; and is, in the same manner, by the Glass-coachman, cheerfully admitted. Whither go so many Dames? 'Tis his Majesty's *Couchée*, Majesty just gone to bed, and all the Palace-world is retiring home. But the Glass-coachman still waits; his fare seemingly incomplete.

By and by, we note a thickset Individual, in round hat and peruke, arm-and-arm with some servant, seemingly of the Runner or Courier sort; he also issues through Villequier's door; starts a shoebuckle as he passes one of the sentries, stoops down to clasp to again; is however, by the Glass-coachman, still more cheerfully admitted. And *now*, is his fare complete? Not yet; the Glass-coachman still waits. — Alas! and the false Chambermaid has warned Gouvion that she thinks the Royal Family will fly this very night; and Gouvion distrusting his own glazed eyes, has sent express for Lafayette; and Lafayette's Carriage, flaring with lights, rolls this moment through the inner Arch of the Carrousel, — where a Lady shaded in broad gipsy-hat, and leaning on the arm of a servant, also of the Runner or Courier sort, stands aside to let it pass, and has even the whim to touch a spoke of it with her *badine*, — light little magic rod which she calls *badine*, such as the Beautiful then wore. The flare of Lafayette's Carriage rolls past: all is found quiet in the Court-of-Princes; sentries at their post; Majesties' Apartments closed in smooth rest. Your false Chambermaid must have been mistaken? Watch thou, Gouvion, with Argus' vigilance; for, of a truth, treachery is within these walls.

But where is the Lady that stood aside in gipsy-hat, and touched the wheel-spoke with her *badine*? O Reader, that Lady that touched the wheel-spoke was the Queen of France! She has issued safe through that inner Arch, into the Carrousel itself; but not into the Rue de l'Echelle. Flurried by the rattle and rencounter, she took the right hand not the left; neither she nor her Courier knows Paris; he indeed is no Courier, but a loyal stupid *ci-devant*¹ Bodyguard

¹ *ci-devant*: former.

disguised as one. They are off, quite wrong, over the Pont Royal and River; roaming disconsolate in the Rue du Bac; far from the Glass-coachman, who still waits. Waits, with flutter of heart; with thoughts — which he must button close up, under his jarvie-surtout!

Midnight clangs from all the City-steeple; one precious hour has been spent so; most mortals are asleep. The Glass-coachman waits; and in what mood! A brother jarvie drives up, enters into conversation; is answered cheerfully in jarvie-dialect: the brothers of the whip exchange a pinch of snuff; decline drinking together; and part with good night. Be the Heavens blest! here at length is the Queen-lady, in gipsy-hat; safe after perils; who has had to inquire her way. She too is admitted; her Courier jumps aloft, as the other, who is also a disguised Bodyguard, has done: and now, O Glass-coachman of a thousand, — Count Fersen, for the Reader sées it is thou, — drive!

Dust shall not stick to the hoofs of Fersen: crack! crack! the Glass-coach rattles, and every soul breathes lighter. But is Fersen on the right road? Northeastward, to the Barrier of Saint-Martin and Metz Highway, thither were we bound: and lo, he drives right Northward! The royal Individual, in round hat and peruke, sits astonished; but right or wrong, there is no remedy. Crack, crack, we go incessant, through the slumbering City. Seldom, since Paris rose out of mud, or the Long-haired Kings went in Bullock-carts, was there such a drive. Mortals on each hand of you, close by, stretched out horizontal, dormant; and we alive and quaking! Crack, crack, through the Rue de Grammont; across the Boulevard; up the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, — these windows, all silent, of Number 42, were Mirabeau's. Towards the Barrier not of Saint-Martin, but of Clichy on the utmost North! Patience, ye royal Individuals; Fersen understands what he is about. Passing up the Rue de Clichy, he alights for one moment at Madame Sullivan's: "Did Count Fersen's Coachman get the Baroness de Korff's new Berline?" — "Gone with it an hour-and-half ago," grumbles responsive the drowsy Porter.

— "*C'est bien.*" Yes, it is well; — though had not such hour-and-half been *lost*, it were still better. Forth therefore, O Fersen, fast, by the Barrier de Clichy; then Eastward along the Outer Boulevard, what horses and whipcord can do!

Thus Fersen drives, through the ambrosial night. Sleeping Paris is now all on the right-hand of him; silent except for some snoring hum: and now he is Eastward as far as the Barrier de Saint-Martin; looking earnestly for Baroness de Korff's Berline. This Heaven's Berline he at length does descry, drawn up with its six horses, his own German Coachman waiting on the box. Right, thou good German: now haste, whither thou knowest! — And as for us of the Glass-coach, haste too, O haste; much time is already lost! The august Glass-coach fare, six Insides, hastily packs itself into the new Berline; two Bodyguard Couriers behind. The Glass-coach itself is turned adrift, its head towards the City; to wander whither it lists, — and be found next morning tumbled in a ditch. But Fersen is on the new box, with its brave new hammer-cloths; flourishing his whip; he bolts forward towards Bondy. There a third and final Bodyguard Courier of ours ought surely to be, with post-horses ready-ordered. There likewise ought that purchased Chaise, with the two Waiting-maids and their band-boxes, to be; whom also her Majesty could not travel without. Swift, thou deft Fersen, and may the Heavens turn it well!

Once more, by Heaven's blessing, it is all well. Here is the sleeping Hamlet of Bondy; Chaise with Waiting-women; horses all ready, and postilions with their churn-boots, impatient in the dewy dawn. Brief harnessing done, the postilions with their churn-boots vault into the saddles; brandish circularly their little noisy whips. Fersen, under his jarvie-surtout, bends in lowly silent reverence of adieu; royal hands wave speechless inexpressible response; Baroness de Korff's Berline, with the Royalty of France, bounds off: for ever, as it proved. Deft Fersen dashes obliquely Northward, through the country, towards Bougret; gains Bougret, finds his German Coachman and chariot waiting there;

cracks off, and drives undiscovered into unknown space. A deft active man, we say; what he undertook to do is nimbly and successfully done.

And so the Royalty of France is actually fled? This precious night, the shortest of the year, it flies, and drives! *Baroness de Korff* is, at bottom, Dame de Tourzel, Governess of the Royal Children: she who came hooded with the two hooded little ones; little Dauphin; little Madame Royale, known long afterwards as Duchesse d'Angoulême. Baroness de Korff's *Waiting-maid* is the Queen in gipsy-hat. The royal Individual in round hat and peruke, he is *Valet* for the time being. That other hooded Dame, styled *Travelling-companion*, is kind Sister Elizabeth; she had sworn, long since, when the Insurrection of Women was, that only death should part her and them. And so they rush there, not too impetuously, through the Wood of Bondy: — over a Rubicon in their own and France's History.

Great; though the future is all vague! If we reach Bouillé? If we do not reach him? O Louis! and this all round thee is the great slumbering Earth (and overhead, the great watchful Heaven); the slumbering Wood of Bondy, — where Longhaired Childeric Do-nothing was struck through with iron; not unreasonably, in a world like ours. These peaked stone-towers are Raincy; towers of wicked D'Orléans. All slumbers save the multiplex rustle of our new Berline. Loose-skirted scarecrow of an Herb-merchant, with his ass and early greens, toilsomely plodding, seems the only creature we meet. But right ahead the great Northeast sends up evermore his grey brindled dawn: from dewy branch, birds here and there, with short deep warble, salute the coming Sun. Stars fade out, and Galaxies; Street-lamps of the City of God. The Universe, O my brothers, is flinging wide its portals for the Levée of the GREAT HIGH KING. Thou, poor Louis, fareest nevertheless, as mortals do, towards Orient lands of Hope; and the Tuileries with *its* Levées, and France and the Earth itself, is but a larger kind of doghutch, — occasionally going rabid.

CHAPTER IV

ATTITUDE

BUT in Paris, at six in the morning; when some Patriot Deputy, warned by a billet, awoke Lafayette, and they went to the Tuileries? — Imagination may paint, but words cannot, the surprise of Lafayette; or with what bewilderment helpless Gouvion rolled glassy Argus' eyes, discerning now that his false Chambermaid had told true!

However, it is to be recorded that Paris, thanks to an august National Assembly, did, on this seeming doomsday, surpass itself. Never, according to Historian eye-witnesses, was there seen such an "imposing attitude." Sections all "in permanence;" our Townhall too, having first, about ten o'clock, fired three solemn alarm-cannons: above all, our National Assembly! National Assembly, likewise permanent, decides what is needful; with unanimous consent, for the *Côté Droit*¹ sits dumb, afraid of the Lanterne. Decides with a calm promptitude, which rises towards the sublime. One must needs vote, for the thing is self-evident, that his Majesty has been *abducted*, or spirited away, "*enlevé*," by some persons or person unknown: in which case, what will the Constitution have us do? Let us return to first principles, as we always say: "*revenons aux principes*."

By first or by second principles, much is promptly decided: Ministers are sent for, instructed how to continue their functions; Lafayette is examined; and Gouvion, who gives a most helpless account, the best he can. Letters are found written: one Letter, of immense magnitude; all in his Majesty's hand, and evidently of his Majesty's own composition; addressed to the National Assembly. It details, with earnestness, with a childlike simplicity, what woes his Majesty has suffered. Woes great and small: A Necker seen applauded, a Majesty not; then insurrection; want of

¹ *Côté droit*, the party which sat on the right in the Assembly and was conservative and royalist in its tendencies.

due furniture in Tuileries Palace; want of due cash in Civil List; *general* want of cash, of furniture and order; anarchy everywhere: Deficit never yet, in the smallest, “choked or *comblé*:” — wherefore, in brief, his Majesty has retired towards a place of Liberty; and, leaving Sanctions, Federation, and what Oaths there may be, to shift for themselves, does now refer — to what, thinks an august Assembly? To that “Declaration of the Twenty-third of June,” with its “*Seul il fera*, He alone will make his People happy.” As if *that* were not buried, deep enough, under two irrevocable Twelve-months, and the wreck and rubbish of a whole Feudal World! This strange autograph Letter the National Assembly decides on printing; on transmitting to the Eighty-three Departments, with exegetic commentary, short but pithy. Commissioners also shall go forth on all sides; the People be exhorted; the Armies be increased; care taken that the Commonweal suffer no damage. — And now, with a sublime air of calmness, nay of indifference, we “pass to the order of the day!”

By such sublime calmness, the terror of the People is calmed. These gleaming Pike-forests, which bristled fateful in the early sun, disappear again; the far-sounding Street-orators cease, or spout milder. We are to have a civil war; let us have it then. The King is gone; but National Assembly, but France and we remain. The People also takes a great attitude; the People also is calm; motionless as a couchant lion. With but a few *broolings*, some waggings of the tail; to show what it *will* do! Cazalès,¹ for instance, was beset by street-groups, and cries of *Lanterne*; but National Patrols easily delivered him. Likewise all King’s effigies and statues, at least stucco ones, get abolished. Even King’s names; the word *Roi* fades suddenly out of all shop-signs; the Royal Bengal Tiger itself, on the Boulevards, becomes the National Bengal one, *Tigre National*.

How great is a calm couchant People! On the morrow, men will say to one another: “We have no King, yet we slept sound enough.” On the morrow, fervent Achille de

¹ The most noted of royalist sympathizers in the Assembly.

Châtelet, and Thomas Paine¹ the rebellious Needleman, shall have the walls of Paris profusely plastered with their Placard; announcing that there must be a *Republic*.—Need we add, that Lafayette too, though at first menaced by Pikes, has taken a great attitude, or indeed the greatest of all? Scouts and Aides-de-camp fly forth, vague, in quest and pursuit; young Romœuf towards Valenciennes, though with small hope.

Thus Paris; sublimely calmed, in its bereavement. But from the *Messageries Royales*, in all Mail-bags, radiates forth far-darting the electric news: Our Hereditary Representative is flown. Laugh, black Royalists: yet be it in your sleeve only; lest Patriotism notice, and waxing frantic, lower the Lanterne! In Paris alone is a sublime National Assembly with its calmness; truly, other places must take it as they can: with open mouth and eyes; with panic cackling, with wrath, with conjecture. How each one of those dull leathern Diligences, with its leathern bag and “The King is fled,” furrows up smooth France as it goes: through town and hamlet, ruffles the smooth public mind into quivering agitation of death-terror; then lumbers on, as if nothing had happened! Along all highways; towards the utmost borders; till all France is ruffled,—roughened up (metaphorically speaking) into one enormous, desperate-minded, red guggling Turkey Cock!

For example, it is under cloud of night that the leathern Monster reaches Nantes; deep sunk in sleep. The word spoken rouses all Patriot men: General Dumouriez, enveloped in roquelaures, has to descend from his bed-room; finds the street covered with “four or five thousand citizens in their shirts.” Here and there a faint farthing rushlight, hastily kindled; and so many swart-featured haggard faces with

¹ Thomas Paine (1737–1809) was a friend of Franklin; he exercised great influence in persuading the American colonists to declare their independence. His *Rights of Man* voiced eloquently the principles of democracy. He came to France and took an active part in the Revolution, incurring the hatred of Robespierre and escaping the guillotine only by accident.

nightcaps pushed back; and the more or less flowing drapery of nightshirt: open-mouthed till the General say his word! And overhead, as always, the Great Bear is turning so quiet round Boötes; steady, indifferent as the leathern Diligence itself. Take comfort, ye men of Nantes; Boötes and the steady Bear are turning; ancient Atlantic still sends his brine, loud-billowing, up your Loire-stream; brandy shall be hot in the stomach; this is not the Last of the Days, but one before the Last. — The fools! If they knew what was doing, in these very instants, also by candlelight, in the far Northeast!

Perhaps, we may say, the most terrified man in Paris or France is — who thinks the Reader? — seagreen Robespierre. Double paleness, with the shadow of gibbets and halters, overcasts the seagreen features: it is too clear to him that there is to be “a Saint-Bartholomew of Patriots,” that in four-and-twenty hours he will not be in life. These horrid anticipations of the soul he is heard uttering at Pétion’s: by a notable witness. By Madame Roland, namely; her whom we saw, last year, radiant at the Lyons Federation. These four months, the Rolands have been in Paris; arranging with Assembly Committees the Municipal affairs of Lyons, affairs all sunk in debt;—communing, the while, as was most natural, with the best Patriots to be found here, with our Brissots, Pétions, Buzots, Robespierres: who were wont to come to us, says the fair Hostess, four evenings in the week. They, running about, busier than ever this day, would fain have comforted the seagreen man; spake of Achille de Châtelet’s Placard; of a Journal to be called *The Republican*; of preparing men’s minds for a Republic. “A Republic?” said the Seagreen, with one of his dry husky *unsportful* laughs, “What is that?” O seagreen Incorruptible, thou shalt see!

CHAPTER V

THE NEW BERLINE

BUT scouts, all this while, and aides-de-camp, have flown forth faster than the leathern Diligences. Young Romœuf, as we said, was off early towards Valenciennes: distracted Villagers seize him, as a traitor with a finger of his own in the plot; drag him back to the Townhall; to the National Assembly, which speedily grants a new passport. Nay now, that same scarecrow of an Herb-merchant with his ass has bethought him of the grand new Berline seen in the Wood of Bondy; and delivered evidence of it: Romœuf, furnished with new passport, is sent forth with double speed on a hopefuller track; by Bondy, Claye and Chalons, towards Metz, to track the new Berline; and gallops à *franc étrier*.

Miserable new Berline! Why could not Royalty go in some old Berline similar to that of other men? Flying for life, one does not stickle about his vehicle. Monsieur, in a commonplace travelling-carriage is off Northwards; Madame, his Princess, in another, with variation of route: they cross one another while changing horses, without look of recognition; and reach Flanders, no man questioning them. Precisely in the same manner, beautiful Princess de Lamballe¹ set off, about the same hour; and will reach England safe: — would she had continued there! The beautiful, the good, but the unfortunate; reserved for a frightful end!

All runs along, unmolested, speedy, except only the new Berline. Huge leathern vehicle: — huge Argosy, let us say, or Acapulco-ship²; with its heavy stern-boat of Chaise-and-

¹ The Princesse de Lamballe (1749-1792) was the companion and confidante of Marie Antoinette. Beautiful and accomplished, she was hated by the people, who believed her the soul of anti-popular intrigues. Her willingness to serve as the instrument of the Queen's caprices gave color to this suspicion.

² Acapulco was the most important Mexican port on the Pacific and the depot for the Spanish fleets sailing between India and Mexico.

pair; with its three yellow Pilot-boats of Mounted Body-guard Couriers, rocking aimless round it and ahead of it, to bewilder, not to guide! It lumbers along, lurchingly with stress, at a snail's pace; noted of all the world. The Body-guard Couriers, in their yellow liveries, go prancing and clattering; loyal but stupid; unacquainted with all things. Stoppages occur; and breakages, to be repaired at Etoges. King Louis too will dismount, will walk up hills, and enjoy the blessed sunshine: — with eleven horses and double drink-money, and all furtherances of Nature and Art, it will be found that Royalty, flying for life, accomplishes Sixty-nine miles in Twenty-two incessant hours. Slow Royalty! And yet not a minute of these hours but is precious: on minutes hang the destinies of Royalty now.

Readers, therefore, can judge in what humour Duke de Choiseul might stand waiting, in the village of Pont-de-Sommevelle, some leagues beyond Chalons, hour after hour, now when the day bends visibly westward. Choiseul drove out of Paris, in all privacy, ten hours before their Majesties' fixed time; his Hussars, led by Engineer Goguelat, are here duly, come "to escort a Treasure that is expected:" but, hour after hour, is no Baroness de Korff's Berline. Indeed, over all that North-east Region, on the skirts of Champagne and of Lorraine, where the great Road runs, the agitation is considerable. For all along, from this Pont-de-Sommevelle Northeastward as far as Montmédi, at Post-villages and Towns, escorts of Hussars and Dragoons do lounge waiting; a train or chain of Military Escorts; at the Montmédi end of it our brave Bouillé: an electric thunder-chain: which the invisible Bouillé, like a Father Jove, holds in his hand — for wise purposes! Brave Bouillé has done what man could; has spread out his electric thunder-chain of Military Escorts, onwards to the threshold of Chalons: it waits but for the new Korff Berline; to receive it, escort it, and, if need be, bear it off in whirlwind of military fire. They lie and lounge there, we say, these fierce Troopers; from Montmédi and Stenai, through Clermont, Sainte-Menehould to utmost Pont-de-Sommevelle, in all Post-villages; for the route shall

avoid Verdun and great Towns: they loiter impatient, "till the Treasure arrive."

Judge what a day this is for brave Bouillé: perhaps the first day of a new glorious life; surely the last day of the old! Also, and indeed still more, what a day, beautiful and terrible, for your young full-blooded Captains: your Dandoins, Comte de Damas, Duke de Choiseul, Engineer Goguelat, and the like; entrusted with the secret! — Alas, the day bends ever more westward; and no Korff Berline comes to sight. It is four hours beyond the time, and still no Berline. In all Village-streets, Royalist Captains go lounging, looking often Paris-ward; with face of unconcern, with heart full of black care: rigorous Quartermasters can hardly keep the private dragoons from *cafés* and dramshops. Dawn on our bewilderment, thou new Berline; dawn on us, thou Sun-Chariot of a new Berline, with the destinies of France!

It was of his Majesty's ordering, this military array of Escorts: a thing solacing the Royal imagination with a look of security and rescue; yet, in reality, creating only alarm, and, where there was otherwise no danger, danger without end. For each Patriot, in these Post-villages, asks naturally: This clatter of cavalry, and marching and lounging of troops, what means it? To escort a Treasure? Why escort, when no Patriot will steal from the Nation; or where is your Treasure? — There has been such marching and counter-marching: for it is another fatality, that certain of these Military Escorts came out so early as yesterday; the Nineteenth not the Twentieth of the month being the day *first* appointed; which her Majesty, for some necessity or other, saw good to alter. And now consider the suspicious nature of Patriotism; suspicious, above all, of Bouillé the Aristocrat; and how the sour doubting humour has had leave to accumulate and exacerbate for four-and-twenty hours!

At Pont-de-Sommevelle, these Forty foreign Hussars of Goguelat and Duke Choiseul are becoming an unspeakable mystery to all men. They lounged long enough, already, at Sainte-Menehould; lounged and loitered till our National Volunteers there, all risen into hot wrath of doubt, "de-

manded three hundred fusils of their Townhall," and got them. At which same moment too, as it chanced, our Captain Dandoins was just coming in, from Clermont with *his* troop, at the other end of the Village. A fresh troop; alarming enough; though happily they are only Dragoons and French! So that Goguelat with his Hussars had to ride, and even to do it fast; till here at Pont-de-Sommevelle, where Choiseul lay waiting, he found resting-place. Resting-place as on burning marle. For the rumour of him flies abroad; and men run to and fro in fright and anger: Chalons sends forth exploratory pickets of National Volunteers towards this hand; which meet exploratory pickets, coming from Sainte-Menehould, on that. What is it, ye whiskered Hussars, men of foreign guttural speech; in the name of Heaven, what is it that brings you? A Treasure? — exploratory pickets shake their heads. The hungry Peasants, however, know too well what Treasure it is; Military seizure for rents, feudalities; which no Bailiff could make us pay! This they know; — and set to jingling their Parish-bell by way of tocsin; with rapid effect! Choiseul and Goguelat, if the whole country is not to take fire, must needs, be there Berline, be there no Berline, saddle and ride.

They mount; and this parish tocsin happily ceases. They ride slowly Eastward; towards Sainte-Menehould; still hoping the Sun-Chariot of a Berline may overtake them. Ah me, no Berline! And near now is that Sainte-Menehould, which expelled us in the morning, with its "three hundred National fusils;" which looks, belike, not too lovingly on Captain Dandoins and his fresh Dragoons, though only French; — which, in a word, one dare not enter the *second* time, under pain of explosion! With rather heavy heart, our Hussar Party strikes off to the left; through by-ways, through pathless hills and woods, they, avoiding Sainte-Menehould and all places which have seen them heretofore, will make direct for the distant Village of Varennes. It is probable they will have a rough evening-ride.

This first military post, therefore, in the long thunder-chain, has gone off with no effect; or with worse, and your

chain threatens to entangle itself! — The Great Road, however, is got hushed again into a kind of quietude, though one of the wakefullest. Indolent Dragoons cannot, by any Quartermaster, be kept altogether from the dramshop; where Patriots drink, and will even treat, eager enough for news. Captains, in a state near distraction, beat the dusty highway, with a face of indifference; and no Sun-Chariot appears. Why lingers it? Incredible, that with eleven horses, and such yellow Couriers and furtherances, its rate should be under the weightiest dray-rate, some three miles an hour! Alas, one knows not whether it ever even got out of Paris; — and yet also one knows not whether, this very moment, it is not at the Village-end! One's heart flutters on the verge of unutterabilities.

CHAPTER VI

OLD-DRAGOON DROUET

IN this manner, however, has the Day bent downwards. Wearied mortals are creeping home from their field-labour; the village-artisan eats with relish his supper of herbs, or has strolled forth to the village-street for a sweet mouthful of air and human news. Still summer-eventide everywhere! The great Sun hangs flaming on the utmost Northwest; for it is his longest day this year. The hill-tops rejoicing will ere long be at their ruddiest, and blush Good-night. The thrush, in green dells, on long-shadowed leafy spray, pours gushing his glad serenade, to the babble of brooks grown audibler; silence is stealing over the Earth. Your dusty Mill of Valmy, as all other mills and drudgeries, may furl its canvas, and cease swashing and circling. The swenkt grinders in this Treadmill of an Earth have ground out another Day; and lounge there, as we say, in village-groups; movable, or ranked on social stone-seats; their children, mischievous imps, sporting about their feet. Unnotable hum of sweet human gossip rises from this Village of Sainte-Menehould, as from all other villages. Gossip mostly sweet, unnotable; for the very Dragoons are French and

gallant; nor as yet has the Paris-and-Verdun Diligence, with its leathern bag, rumbled in, to terrify the minds of men.

One figure nevertheless we do note at the last door of the Village: that figure in loose-flowing nightgown, of Jean Baptiste Drouet, Master of the Post here. An acrid choleric man, rather dangerous-looking; still in the prime of life, though he has served, in his time, as a Condé Dragoon. This day, from an early hour Drouet got his choler stirred, and has been kept fretting. Hussar Goguelat in the morning saw good, by way of thrift, to bargain with his own Inn-keeper, not with Drouet regular *Maitre de Post*, about some gig-horse for the sending back of his gig; which thing Drouet perceiving came over in red ire, menacing the Innkeeper, and would not be appeased. Wholly an unsatisfactory day. For Drouet is an acrid Patriot too, was at the Paris Feast of Pikes: and what do these Bouillé soldiers mean? Hussars, — with their gig, and a vengeance to it! — have hardly been thrust out, when Dandoins and his fresh Dragoons arrive from Clermont, and stroll. For what purpose? Choleric Drouet steps out and steps in, with long-flowing nightgown; looking abroad, with that sharpness of faculty which stirred choler gives to man.

On the other hand, mark Captain Dandoins on the street of that same Village; sauntering with a face of indifference, a heart eaten of black care! For no Korff Berline makes its appearance. The great Sun flames broader towards setting: one's heart flutters on the verge of dread unutterabilities.

By Heaven! here is the yellow Bodyguard Courier; spurring fast, in the ruddy evening light! Steady, O Dandoins, stand with inscrutable indifferent face; though the yellow blockhead spurs past the Post-house; inquires to find it; and stirs the Village, all delighted with his fine livery. — Lumbering along with its mountains of bandboxes, and Chaise behind, the Korff Berline rolls in; huge Acapulco-ship with its Cockboat, having got thus far. The eyes of the Villagers look enlightened, as such eyes do when a coach-transit, which is an event, occurs for them. Strolling Dra-

goons respectfully, so fine are the yellow liveries, bring hand to helmet; and a Lady in gipsy-hat responds with a grace peculiar to her. Dandoins stands with folded arms, and what look of indifference and disdainful garrison-air a man can, while the heart is like leaping out of him. Curled disdainful moustachio; careless glance, — which however surveys the Village-groups, and does not like them. With his eye he bespeaks the yellow Courier, Be quick, be quick! Thickheaded Yellow cannot understand the eye; comes up mumbling, to ask in words: seen of the village!

Nor is Post-master Drouet unobservant, all this while: but steps out and steps in, with his long-flowing nightgown, in the level sunlight; prying into several things. When a man's faculties, at the right time, are sharpened by choler, it may lead to much. That Lady in slouched gipsy-hat, though sitting back in the Carriage, does she not resemble some one we have seen, some time; — at the Feast of Pikes, or elsewhere? And this *Grosse-Tête* in round hat and peruke, which, looking rearward, pokes itself out from time to time, methinks there are features in it — ? Quick, *Sieur Guillaume*, Clerk of the *Directoire*, bring me a new Assignat! Drouet scans the new Assignat; compares the Paper-money Picture with the Gross Head in round hat there: by Day and Night! you might say the one was an attempted Engraving of the other. And this march of Troops; this sauntering and whispering, — I see it!

Drouet Post-master of this Village, hot Patriot, Old-Dragoon of Condé, consider, therefore, what thou wilt do. And fast, for behold the new Berline, expeditiously yoked, cracks whipcord, and rolls away! — Drouet dare not, on the spur of the instant, clutch the bridles in his own two hands; Dandoins, with broadsword, might hew you off. Our poor Nationals, not one of them here, have three hundred fusils, but then no powder; besides one is not sure, only morally-certain. Drouet, as an adroit Old-Dragoon of Condé, does what is advisablest; privily bespeaks Clerk Guillaume, Old-Dragoon of Condé he too; privily, while Clerk Guillaume is saddling two of the fleetest horses, slips over to the Townhall

to whisper a word; then mounts with Clerk Guillaume; and the two bound eastward in pursuit, to *see* what can be done.

They bound eastward, in sharp trot: their moral-certainty permeating the Village, from the Townhall outwards, in busy whispers. Alas! Captain Dandoins orders his Dragoons to mount; but they, complaining of long fast, demand bread-and-cheese first; — before which brief repast can be eaten, the whole Village is permeated; not whispering now, but blustering and shrieking! National Volunteers, in hurried muster, shriek for gunpowder; Dragoons halt between Patriotism and Rule of the Service, between bread-and-cheese and fixed bayonets: Dandoins hands secretly his Pocket-book, with its secret dispatches, to the rigorous Quartermaster: the very Ostlers have stable-forks and flails. The rigorous Quartermaster, half-saddled, cuts out his way with the sword's edge, amid levelled bayonets, amid Patriot vociferations, adjurations, flail-strokes; and rides frantic; — few or even none following him; the rest, so sweetly constrained, consenting to stay there.

And thus the new Berline rolls; and Drouet and Guillaume gallop after it, and Dandoins' Troopers or Trooper gallops after them; and Sainte-Menehould, with some leagues of the King's Highway, is in explosion; — and your Military thunder-chain has gone off in a self-destructive manner; one may fear, with the frightfullest issues.

CHAPTER VII

THE NIGHT OF SPURS

THIS comes of mysterious Escorts, and a new Berline with eleven horses: "he that has a secret should not only hide it, but hide that he has it to hide." Your first Military Escort has exploded self-destructive; and all Military Escorts and a suspicious Country will now be up, explosive; comparable *not* to victorious thunder. Comparable, say rather, to the first stirring of an Alpine Avalanche; which, once stir it, as here at Sainte-Menehould, will spread, — all round, and on

and on, as far as Stenai; thundering with wild ruin, till Patriot Villagers, Peasantry, Military Escorts, new Berline and Royalty are down, — jumbling in the Abyss!

The thick shades of Night are falling. Postilions crack and whip: the Royal Berline is through Clermont, where Colonel Comte de Damas got a word whispered to it; is safe through, towards Varennes; rushing at the rate of double drink-money: an Unknown, "*Inconnu* on horseback," shrieks earnestly some hoarse whisper, not audible, into the rushing Carriage-window, and vanishes, left in the night. August Travellers palpitate; nevertheless overwearied Nature sinks every one of them into a kind of sleep. Alas, and Drouet and Clerk Guillaume spur; taking side-roads, for shortness, for safety; scattering abroad that moral-certainty of theirs; which flies, a bird of the air carrying it!

And your rigorous Quartermaster spurs; awakening hoarse trumpet-tone, — as here at Clermont, calling out Dragoons gone to bed. Brave Colonel de Damas has them mounted, in part, these Clermont men; young Cornet Remy dashes off with a few. But the Patriot Magistracy is out here at Clermont too; National Guards shrieking for ball-cartridges; and the Village "illuminates itself;" — deft Patriots springing out of bed; alertly, in shirt or shift, striking a light; sticking up each his farthing candle, or penurious oil-cruse, till all glitters and glimmers; so deft are they! A *camisado*, or shirt-tumult, everywhere: storm-bell set a-ringing; village-drum beating furious *générale*, as here at Clermont, under illumination; distracted Patriots pleading and menacing! Brave young Colonel de Damas, in that uproar of distracted Patriotism, speaks some fire-sentences to what Troopers he has: "Comrades insulted at Sainte-Menehould: King and Country calling on the brave;" then gives the fire-word, *Draw swords*. Whereupon, alas, the Troopers only *smite* their sword-handles, driving them further home! "To me, whoever is for the King!" cries Damas in despair; and gallops, he with some poor loyal Two, of the Subaltern sort, into the bosom of the Night.

Night unexampled in the Clermontais; shortest of the

year: remarkablest of the century: Night deserving to be named of Spurs! Cornet Remy, and those Few he dashed off with, has missed his road; is galloping for hours towards Verdun; then, for hours, across hedged country, through roused hamlets, towards Varennes. Unlucky Cornet Remy; unluckier Colonel Damas, with whom there ride desperate only some loyal Two! More ride not of that Clermont Escort: of other Escorts, in other Villages, not even Two may ride; but only all curvet and prance, — impeded by storm-bell and your Village illuminating itself.

And Drouet rides and Clerk Guillaume; and the Country runs. — Goguelat and Duke Choiseul are plunging through morasses, over cliffs, over stock and stone, in the shaggy woods of the Clermontais; by tracks; or trackless, with guides; Hussars tumbling into pitfalls, and lying “swooned three quarters of an hour,” the rest refusing to march without them. What an evening-ride from Pont-de-Sommeville; what a thirty hours, since Choiseul quitted Paris, with Queen’s-valet Leonard in the chaise by him! Black Care sits behind the rider. Thus go they plunging; rustle the owlet from his branchy nest; champ the sweet-scented forest-herb, queen-of-the-meadows *spilling* her spikenard; and frighten the ear of Night. But hark! towards twelve o’clock, as one guesses, for the very stars are gone out: sound of the tocsin from Varennes? Checking bridle, the Hussar Officer listens: “Some fire undoubtedly!” — yet rides on, with double breathlessness, to verify.

Yes, gallant friends that do your utmost, it is a certain sort of fire: difficult to quench. — The Korff Berline, fairly ahead of all this riding Avalanche, reached the little paltry Village of Varennes about eleven o’clock; hopeful, in spite of that hoarse-whispering Unknown. Do not all Towns now lie behind us; Verdun avoided, on our right? Within wind of Bouillé himself, in a manner; and the darkest of mid-summer nights favouring us! And so we halt on the hill-top at the South end of the Village; expecting our relay; which young Bouillé’s own son, with his Escort of Hussars, was to have ready; for in this Village is no Post. Distracting

to think of: neither horse nor Hussar is here! Ah, and stout horses, a proper relay belonging to Duke Choiseul, do stand at hay, but in the Upper Village over the Bridge; and we know not of them. Hussars likewise do wait, but drinking in the taverns. For indeed it is six hours beyond the time; young Bouillé, silly stripling, thinking the matter over for this night, has retired to bed. And so our yellow Couriers, inexperienced, must rove, groping, bungling, through a Village mostly asleep: Postilions will not, for any money, go on with the tired horses; not at least without refreshment; not they, let the Valet in round hat argue as he likes.

Miserable! "For five-and-thirty minutes" by the King's watch, the Berline is at a dead stand: Round-hat arguing with Churn-boots; tired horses slobbering their meal-and-water; yellow Couriers groping, bungling; — young Bouillé asleep, all the while, in the Upper Village, and Choiseul's fine team standing there at hay. No help for it; not with a King's ransom; the horses deliberately slobber, Round-hat argues, Bouillé sleeps. And mark now, in the thick night, do not two Horsemen, with jaded trot, come clank-clanking; and start with half-pause, if one noticed them, at sight of this dim mass of a Berline, and its dull slobbering and arguing; then prick off faster, into the Village? It is Drouet, he and Clerk Guillaume! Still ahead, they two, of the whole, riding hurly-burly; unshot, though some brag of having chased them. Perilous is Drouet's errand also; but he is an Old-Dragoon, with his wits shaken thoroughly awake.

The Village of Varennes lies dark and slumberous; a most unlevel Village, of inverse saddle-shape, as men write. It sleeps; the rushing of the River Aire singing lullaby to it. Nevertheless from the Golden Arm, *Bras d'Or* Tavern, across that sloping Market-place, there still comes shine of social light; comes voice of rude drovers, or the like, who have not yet taken the stirrup-cup; Boniface Le Blanc, in white apron, serving them: cheerful to behold. To this *Bras d'Or*, Drouet enters, alacrity looking through his eyes; he nudges Boniface, in all privacy, "*Camarade, es-tu bon Patriote, Art thou*

a good Patriot?" — "*Si je suis!*"¹ answers Boniface. — "In that case," eagerly whispers Drouet — what whisper is needful, heard of Boniface alone.

And now see Boniface Le Blanc bustling, as he never did for the jolliest toper. See Drouet and Guillaume, dexterous Old-Dragoons, instantly down blocking the Bridge, with a "furniture-wagon they find there," with whatever wagons, tumbrils, barrels, barrows their hands can lay hold of; — till no carriage can pass. Then swiftly, the Bridge once blocked, see them take station hard by, under Varennes Archway: joined by Le Blanc, Le Blanc's Brother, and one or two alert Patriots he has roused. Some half-dozen in all, with National muskets, they stand close, waiting under the Archway, till that same Korff Berline rumble up.

It rumbles up: *Alte là!* lanterns flash out from under coat-skirts, bridles chuck in strong fists, two National muskets level themselves fore and aft through the two Coach-doors: "Mesdames, your Passports?" — Alas, alas! Sieur Sausse, Procureur of the Township, Tallow-chandler also and Grocer, is there, with official grocer-politeness; Drouet with fierce logic and ready wit: — The respected Travelling Party, be it Baroness de Korff's, or persons of still higher consequence, will perhaps please to rest itself in M. Sausse's till the dawn strike up!

O Louis; O hapless Marie-Antoinette, fated to pass thy life with such men! Phlegmatic Louis, art thou but lazy semi-animate phlegm then, to the centre of thee? King, Captain-General, Sovereign Frank! if thy heart ever formed, since it began beating under the name of heart, any resolution at all, be it now then, or never in this world: — "Violent nocturnal individuals, and if it were persons of high consequence? And if it were the King himself? Has the King not the power, which all beggars have, of travelling unmolested on his own Highway? Yes: it is the King; and tremble ye to know it! The King has said, in this one small matter; and in France, or under God's Throne, is no power that shall gainsay. Not the King shall ye stop here

¹ "Indeed I am."

under this your miserable Archway; but his dead body only, and answer it to Heaven and Earth. To me, Bodyguards; Postilions, *en avant!*"—One fancies in that case the pale paralysis of these two Le Blanc musketeers, the drooping of Drouet's underjaw; and how Procureur Sausse had melted like tallow in furnace-heat: Louis faring on; in some few steps awakening Young Bouillé, awakening relays and Husars: triumphant entry, with cavalcading high-brandishing Escort, and Escorts, into Montmédi; and the whole course of French History different!

Alas, it was not *in* the poor phlegmatic man. Had it been in him, French History had never come under this Varennes Archway to decide itself. — He steps out; all step out. Procureur Sausse gives his grocer-arms to the Queen and Sister Elizabeth; Majesty taking the two children by the hand. And thus they walk, coolly back, over the Market-place, to Procureur Sausse's; mount into his small upper story; where straightway his Majesty "demands refreshments." Demands refreshments, as is written; gets bread-and-cheese with a bottle of Burgundy; and remarks, that it is the best Burgundy he ever drank! . . .

CHAPTER VIII

THE RETURN

So, then, our grand Royalist Plot, of Flight to Metz, has *executed* itself. Long hovering in the background, as a dread royal *ultimatum*, it has rushed forward in its terrors: verily to some purpose. How many Royalist Plots and Projects, one after another, cunningly-devised, that were to explode like powder-mines and thunder-claps; not one solitary Plot of which has issued otherwise! Powder-mine of a *Séance Royale* on the Twenty-third of June 1789,¹ which exploded as we then said, "through the touchhole;" which next, your wargod Broglie having *reloaded* it, brought a Bastille about your ears. Then came fervent Opera-Repast,

¹ It was on this date that Louis, by the exercise of his royal fiat, attempted to prevent the formation of the National Assembly.

with flourishing of sabres, and *O Richard, O my King*; which, aided by Hunger, produces Insurrection of Women, and Pallas Athene in the shape of Demoiselle Théroigne. Valour profits not; neither has fortune smiled on fanfaronade. The Bouillé Armament ends as the Broglie one had done. Man after man spends himself in this cause, only to work it quicker ruin; it seems a cause doomed, forsaken of Earth and Heaven.

On the Sixth of October gone a year, King Louis, escorted by Demoiselle Théroigne and some two hundred thousand, made a Royal Progress and Entrance into Paris, such as man had never witnessed; we prophesied him Two more such; and accordingly another of them, after this Flight to Metz, is now coming to pass. Théroigne will not escort here; neither does Mirabeau now "sit in one of the accompanying carriages." Mirabeau lies dead, in the Pantheon of Great Men. Théroigne lies living, in dark Austrian Prison; having gone to Liége, professionally, and been seized there. Bemurmured now by the hoarse-flowing Danube: the light of her Patriot Supper-parties gone quite out; so lies Théroigne: she shall speak with the Kaiser face to face, and return. And France lies — how! Fleeting Time shears down the great and the little; and in two years alters many things.

But at all events, here, we say, is a second Ignominious Royal Procession, though much altered; to be witnessed also by its hundreds of thousands. Patience, ye Paris Patriots; the Royal Berline is returning. Not till Saturday: for the Royal Berline travels by slow stages; amid such loud-voiced confluent sea of National Guards, sixty thousand as they count; amid such tumult of all people. Three National Assembly Commissioners, famed Barnave, famed Pétion, generally-respectable Latour-Maubourg, have gone to meet it; of whom the two former ride in the Berline itself beside Majesty, day after day. Latour, as a mere respectability, and man of whom all men speak well, can ride in the rear, with Dame de Tourzel and the *Soubrettes*.

So on Saturday evening, about seven o'clock, Paris by

hundreds of thousands is again drawn up: not now dancing the tricolor joy-dance of hope; nor as yet dancing in fury-dance of hate and revenge: but in silence, with vague look of conjecture, and curiosity mostly scientific. A Saint-Antoine Placard has given notice this morning that "whosoever insults Louis shall be caned, whosoever applauds him shall be hanged." Behold then, at last, that wonderful New Berline; encircled by blue National sea with fixed bayonets, which flows slowly, floating it on, through the silent assembled hundreds of thousands. Three yellow Couriers sit atop bound with ropes; Pétion, Barnave, their Majesties, with Sister Elizabeth, and the Children of France, are within.

Smile of embarrassment, or cloud of dull sourness, is on the broad phlegmatic face of his Majesty; who keeps declaring to the successive Official persons, what is evident, "*Eh bien, me voilà*, Well, here you have me;" and what is not evident, "I do assure you I did not mean to pass the frontiers;" and so forth: speeches natural for that poor Royal Man; which Decency would veil. Silent is her Majesty, with a look of grief and scorn; natural for that Royal Woman. Thus lumbers and creeps the ignominious Royal Procession, through many streets, amid a silent-gazing people: comparable, Mercier thinks, to some *Procession du Roi de Basoche*; or say, Procession of King Crispin, with his Dukes of Sutor-mania and royal blazonry of Cordwainery.¹ Except indeed that this is *not* comic; ah no, it is comico-tragic; with bound Couriers, and a Doom hanging over it; most fantastic, yet most miserably real. Miserablest *fleBILE ludibrium*² of a Pickleherring Tragedy!³ It

¹ The association of the law-students or clerks in the courts, known as the Basoche, had the title of Kingdom until the end of the 16th century. The members of the Basoche held fêtes of merriment every year, conspicuous in which was the grand review by the King of the Basoche.

Crispin, with his brother Crispinian, was the patron saint of shoemakers. For centuries the festival of Crispin was the occasion of merry-making and of gorgeous processions; those held in honor of "King Crispin" at Edinburgh and Stirling were especially notable. Cf. Shakespeare, *Henry V*, iv, 3.

² A "sorry jest."

³ See p. 11, note 1.

sweeps along there, in most *ungorgeous* pall, through many streets in the dusty summer evening; gets itself at length wriggled out of sight; vanishing in the Tuileries Palace — towards its doom, of slow torture, *peine forte et dure*.

Populace, it is true, seizes the three rope-bound yellow Couriers; will at least massacre *them*. But our august Assembly, which is sitting at this great moment, sends out Deputation of rescue; and the whole is got huddled up. Barnave, "all dusty," is already there, in the National Hall; making brief discreet address and report. As indeed, through the whole journey, this Barnave has been most discreet, sympathetic; and has gained the Queen's trust, whose noble instinct teaches her always who is to be trusted. Very different from heavy Pétion; who, if Campan speaks truth, ate his luncheon, comfortably filled his wine-glass, in the Royal Berline; flung out his chicken-bones past the nose of Royalty itself; and, on the King's saying, "France cannot be a Republic," answered, "No, it is not ripe yet." Barnave is henceforth a Queen's adviser, if advice could profit; and her Majesty astonishes Dame Campan by signifying almost a regard for Barnave; and that, in a day of retribution and Royal triumph, Barnave shall *not* be executed.

On Monday night Royalty went; on Saturday evening it returns: so much, within one short week, has Royalty accomplished for itself. The Pickleherring Tragedy has vanished in the Tuileries Palace, towards "pain strong and hard." Watched, fettered and humbled, as Royalty never was. Watched even in its sleeping-apartments and inmost recesses: for it has to sleep with door set ajar, blue National Argus watching, his eye fixed on the Queen's curtains; nay, on one occasion, as the Queen cannot sleep, he offers to sit by her pillow, and converse a little!

[Notwithstanding the growth of republican sentiment, resulting from the King's flight, Louis was not deposed. France was still royalist. In September, 1791, the new constitution was put into effect, giving to France a limited monarchy and a single representative assembly: — the *Legislative*. This form of government, however, — being in essence a

compromise, — was satisfactory to none, and a conflict speedily broke out between the King and the Assembly, occasioned by the intrigues of the emigrés, the rebellion incited by the anti-revolutionary clergy, and the suspected treachery of Louis. In April, 1792, this conflict was brought to a head by the outbreak of war between France and Austria.

The government soon showed itself incapable of carrying on the war, and the French armies were overwhelmed with disasters. The people became enraged at royalty, believing that it was purposely betraying the nation in order to facilitate the Austrian invasion and the reëstablishment of the royal despotism with foreign aid. Popular wrath was further irritated by the entrance of Prussia into the war and a manifesto issued by the Prussian Duke of Brunswick, which, by threatening Paris with destruction if Louis were attacked, seemed to imply that the King of France and the enemies of France were allies.

Driven to desperation by the danger of invasion and the incapacity or treachery of the government, the people of Paris determined that their sole sa'vation lay in the deposition of Louis and in the creation of a strong patriotic government. On the 10th of August, 1792, the Paris mob, organized by Danton, stormed the royal palace of the Tuileries and forced Louis to flee to the Assembly. There he was suspended from his royal office and at once thrown into prison; his fate was to be decided by a National Convention, which should be elected in September. In the meantime, the national defense was organized by Danton with vigor and enthusiasm, in spite of which the Prussians crossed the border, and besieging the fortress of Verdun, threatened the safety of Paris. The capital was in a "death-panic," beset by the fear of the foreign invader and at the same time by fear of the "traitorous aristocrats" at home.]

VOLUME III — BOOK I

CHAPTER IV

SEPTEMBER IN PARIS

... Thirty-thousand Aristocrats within our own walls; and but the merest quarter-tithe of them yet put in prison! Nay there goes a word that even these will revolt. Sieur Jean Julien, wagoner of Vaugirard, being set in the Pillory last Friday, took all at once to crying, That he would be well revenged ere long; that the King's Friends in Prison would burst out, force the Temple, set the King on horseback, and, joined by the unimprisoned, ride roughshod over us all. This the unfortunate wagoner of Vaugirard did bawl, at the top of his lungs: when snatched off to the Townhall, he persisted in it, still bawling; yesternight, when they guillotined him, he died with the froth of it on his lips. For a man's mind, padlocked to the Pillory, may go mad; and all men's minds may go mad, and "believe him," as the frenetic will do, "*because it is impossible.*"

So that apparently the knot of the crisis and last agony of France is come? Make front to this, thou Improvised Commune,¹ strong Danton, whatsoever man is strong! Readers can judge whether the Flag of Country in Danger flapped soothingly or distractively on the souls of men, that day.

But the Improvised Commune, but strong Danton is not wanting, each after his kind. Huge Placards are getting plastered to the walls; at two o'clock the storm-bell shall be sounded, the alarm-cannon fired; all Paris shall rush to the Champ-de-Mars, and have itself enrolled. Unarmed, truly, and undrilled; but desperate, in the strength of frenzy. Haste, ye men; ye very women, offer to mount guard

¹ The Commune was the municipal government of Paris.

and shoulder the brown musket: weak clucking-hens, in a state of desperation, will fly at the muzzle of the mastiff; and even conquer him, — by vehemence of character! Terror itself, when once grown transcendental, becomes a kind of courage; as frost sufficiently intense, according to Poet Milton, will *burn*. — Danton, the other night, in the Legislative Committee of General Defence, when the other Ministers and Legislators had all opined, said, It would not do to quit Paris, and fly to Saumur; that they must abide by Paris; and take such attitude as would put their enemies in fear, — *faire peur*; a word of his which has been often repeated, and reprinted — in italics.

At two of the clock, Beaurepaire, as we saw, has shot himself at Verdun;¹ and, over Europe, mortals are going in for afternoon sermon. But at Paris, all steeples are clanging not for sermon; the alarm-gun booming from minute to minute; Champ-de-Mars and Fatherland's Altar boiling with desperate terror-courage: what a *miserere* going up to Heaven from this once Capital of the Most Christian King! The Legislative sits in alternate awe and effervescence; Vergniaud proposing that Twelve shall go and dig personally on Montmartre;² which is decreed by acclaim.

But better than digging personally with acclaim, see Danton enter; — the black brows clouded, the colossus-figure tramping heavy; grim energy looking from all features of the rugged man! Strong is that grim Son of France and Son of Earth; a Reality and not a Formula he too: and surely now if ever, being hurled *low* enough, it is on the Earth and on Realities that he rests. "Legislators!" so speaks the stentor-voice, as the Newspapers yet preserve it for us, "it is not the alarm-cannon that you hear: it is the *pas-de-charge* against our enemies. To conquer them, to hurl them back, what do we require? *Il nous faut de l'audace, et encore de l'audace, et toujours de l'audace*, To dare,

¹ Verdun, the last fortress defending the open road to Paris, surrendered disgracefully on September 2, — its commander, Beaurepaire, committing suicide.

² The heights to the north of Paris.

and again to dare, and without end to dare!" — Right so, thou brawny Titan; there is nothing left for thee but that. Old men, who heard it, will still tell you how the reverberating voice made all hearts swell, in that moment; and braced them to the sticking-place; and thrilled abroad over France, like electric virtue, as a word spoken in season.

But the Commune, enrolling in the Champ-de-Mars? But the Committee of Watchfulness, become now Committee of Public Salvation; whose conscience is Marat? The Commune enrolling enrolls many; provides Tents for them in that Mars'-Field, that they may march with dawn on the morrow: praise to this part of the Commune! To Marat and the Committee of Watchfulness not praise; — not even blame, such as could be meted out in these insufficient dialects of ours; expressive silence rather! Lone Marat, the man forbid, meditating long in his Cellars of refuge, on his Stylites Pillar,¹ could see salvation in one thing only: in the fall of "two hundred and sixty thousand Aristocrat heads." With so many score of Naples Bravoës, each a dirk in his right-hand, a muff on his left, he would traverse France, and do it. But the world laughed, mocking the severe-benevolence of a People's-Friend; and his idea could not become an action, but only a fixed-idea. Lo, now, however, he has come down from his Stylites Pillar, to a *Tribune particulière*; here now, without the dirks, without the *muffs* at least, were it not grown possible, — now in the knots of the crisis, when salvation or destruction hangs in the hour!

The Ice-Tower of Avignon² was noised of sufficiently, and lives in all memories; but the authors were not punished: nay we saw Jourdan Coupe-tête, borne on men's shoulders, like a copper Portent, "traversing the cities of

¹ Saint Simeon Stylites was a hermit who, for the mortification of the flesh, spent his life upon the top of a pillar.

² In October, 1791, the anti-revolutionists at Avignon, which had been taken from the Pope and annexed to France, were massacred with horrible cruelty. Jourdan, the revolutionary chief, threw the papal adherents into the dungeon of the ice-tower of the castle, where unmentionable atrocities were committed.

the South." — What phantasms, squalid-horrid, shaking their dirk and muff, may dance through the brain of a Marat, in this dizzy pealing of tocsin-miserere and universal frenzy, seek not to guess, O Reader! Nor what the cruel Billaud "in his short brown coat" was thinking; not Sergeant, not yet *Agate*-Sergeant; nor Panis the confidant of Danton; — nor, in a word, how gloomy Orcus does breed in her gloomy womb, and fashion her monsters and prodigies of events, which thou seest her visibly bear! Terror is on these streets of Paris; terror and rage, tears and frenzy: tocsin-miserere pealing through the air; fierce desperation rushing to battle; mothers, with streaming eyes and wild hearts, sending forth their sons to die. "Carriage horses are seized by the bridle," that they may draw cannon; "the traces cut, the carriages left standing." In such tocsin-miserere, and murky bewilderment of Frenzy, are not Murder, Até and all Furies near at hand? On slight hint — who knows on how slight? — may not Murder come; and, with *her* snaky-sparkling head, illuminate this murk!

How it was and went, what part might be premeditated, what was improvised and accidental, man will never know, till the great Day of Judgment make it known. But with a Marat for keeper of the Sovereign's Conscience — And we know what the *ultima ratio* of Sovereigns, when they are driven to it, is! In this Paris there are as wicked men, say a hundred or more, as exist in all the Earth: to be hired, and set on; to set on, of their own accord, unhired. — And yet we will remark that premeditation itself is not performance, is not surety of performance; that it is perhaps, at most, surety of *letting* whosoever wills perform. From the purpose of crime to the act of crime there is an abyss; wonderful to think of. The finger lies on the pistol; but the man is not yet a murderer: nay, his whole nature staggering at such consummation, is there not a confused pause rather, — one last instant of possibility for him? Not yet a murderer; it is at the mercy of light trifles whether the most fixed idea may not yet become unfixed. One slight twitch of a muscle, the death-flash bursts; and he is it, and will for

Eternity be it; — and Earth has become a penal Tartarus for him; his horizon girdled now not with golden hope, but with red flames of remorse; voices from the depths of Nature sounding, Woe, woe on him!

Of such stuff are we all made; on such powder-mines of bottomless guilt and criminality, — “if God restrained not,” as is well said, — does the purest of us walk. There are depths in man that go the length of lowest Hell, as there are heights that reach the highest Heaven; — for are not both Heaven and Hell made out of him, made by him, everlasting Miracle and Mystery as he is? — But looking on this Champ-de-Mars, with its tent-buildings and frantic enrolments; on this murky-simmering Paris, with its crammed Prisons (supposed about to burst), with its tocsin-miserere, its mothers’ tears, and soldiers’ farewell shoutings, — the pious soul might have prayed, that day, that God’s grace would restrain, and greatly restrain; lest on slight heft or hint, Madness, Horror and Murder rose, and this Sabbathday of September became a Day black in the Annals of men.

The tocsin is pealing its loudest, the clocks inaudibly striking *Three*, when poor Abbé Sicard, with some thirty other Nonjurant Priests,¹ in six carriages, fare along the streets, from their preliminary House of Detention at the Townhall, westward towards the Prison of the Abbaye. Carriages enough stand deserted on the streets; these six move on, — through angry multitudes, cursing as they move. Accursed Aristocrat Tartuffes,² this is the pass ye have brought us to! And now ye will break the Prisons, and set Capet Veto on horseback to ride over us? Out upon you, Priests of Beelzebub and Moloch; of Tartuffery, Mammon and the Prussian Gallows, — which ye name Mother-Church

¹ Those who refused to take the oath of compliance with the civil constitution of the clergy.

² *Tartuffe*, a comedy by Molière. “Tartuffe is an obscene pedant, a hypocritical wretch, who succeeds, not by clever plots, but by vulgar mummary and by the coarse audacity of his caddish disposition.” Taine, *English Literature*, I, 560.

and God! — Such reproaches have the poor Nonjurants to endure, and worse; spoken in on them by frantic Patriots, who mount even on the carriage-steps; the very Guards hardly refraining. Pull up your carriage-blinds? — No! answers Patriotism, clapping its horny paw on the carriage-blind, and crushing it down again. Patience in oppression has limits: we are close on the Abbaye, it has lasted long: a poor Nonjurant, of quicker temper, smites the horny paw with his cane; nay, finding solacement in it, smites the unkempt head, sharply and again more sharply, twice over, — seen clearly of us and of the world. It is the last that we see clearly. Alas, next moment, the carriages are locked and blocked in endless raging tumults; in yells deaf to the cry for mercy, which answer the cry for mercy with sabre-thrusts through the heart. The thirty Priests are torn out, are massacred about the Prison-Gate, one after one, — only the poor Abbé Sicard, whom one Moton a watchmaker, knowing him, heroically tried to save and secrete in the Prison, escapes to tell; — and it is Night and Orcus, and Murder's snaky-sparkling head *has* risen in the murk! —

From Sunday afternoon (exclusive of intervals and pauses not final) till Thursday evening, there follow consecutively a Hundred Hours. Which Hundred Hours are to be reckoned with the hours of the Bartholomew Butchery, of the Armagnac Massacres, Sicilian Vespers,¹ or whatsoever is savagest in the annals of this world. Horrible the hour when man's soul, in its paroxysm, spurns asunder the barriers and rules; and shows what dens and depths are in it! For Night and Orcus, as we say, as was long prophesied, have burst forth, here in this Paris, from their subterranean imprisonment; hideous, dim-confused; which it is painful

¹ The Massacre of St. Bartholomew (August 24, 1572) was the culmination of a Catholic plot to destroy all the Protestants in Paris and the vicinity. During the Hundred Years War, the chiefs of one of the French parties, the Armagnacs, were killed by their opponents, the Burgundians, (1418). On the evening of Easter Monday, 1282, the Sicilians at Palermo rose and massacred the French, who had conquered the island; this was known as the Sicilian Vespers.

to look on; and yet which cannot, and indeed which should not, be forgotten.

The Reader, who looks earnestly through this dim Phantasmagory of the Pit, will discern few fixed certain objects; and yet still a few. He will observe, in this Abbaye Prison, the sudden massacre of the Priests being once over, a strange Court of Justice, or call it Court of Revenge and Wild-Justice, swiftly fashion itself, and take seat round a table, with the Prison-Registers spread before it; — Stanislas Maillard, Bastille-hero, famed Leader of the Menads, presiding. O Stanislas, one hoped to meet thee elsewhere than here; thou shifty Riding-Usher, with an inkling of Law! This work also thou hadst to do; and then — to depart for ever from our eyes. At *La Force*, at the *Châtelet*, the *Conciergerie*,¹ the like Court forms itself, with the like accompaniments: the thing that one man does, other men can do. There are some seven Prisons in Paris, full of Aristocrats with conspiracies; — nay not even *Bicêtre* and *Salpêtrière* shall escape, with their Forgers of Assignats: and there are seventy times seven hundred Patriot hearts in a state of frenzy. Scoundrel hearts also there are; as perfect, say, as the Earth holds, — if such are needed. To whom, in this mood, law is as no-law; and killing, by what name soever called, is but work to be done.

So sit the sudden Courts of Wild-Justice, with the Prison-Registers before them; unwonted wild tumult howling all round; the Prisoners in dread expectancy within. Swift: a name is called; bolts jingle, a Prisoner is there. A few questions are put; swiftly this sudden Jury decides: Royalist Plotter or not? Clearly not; in that case, Let the Prisoner be enlarged with *Vive la Nation*. Probably yea; then still, Let the Prisoner be enlarged, but without *Vive la Nation*; or else it may run, Let the Prisoner be conducted to *La Force*. At *La Force* again their formula is, Let the Prisoner be conducted to the Abbaye. — “To *La Force* then!” Volunteer bailiffs seize the doomed man; he is at the outer gate; “enlarged,” or “conducted,” not into *La*

¹ Prisons in Paris.

Force, but into a howling sea; forth, under an arch of wild sabres, axes and pikes; and sinks, hewn asunder. And another sinks, and another; and there forms itself a piled heap of corpses, and the kennels begin to run red. Fancy the yells of these men, their faces of sweat and blood; the crueller shrieks of these women, for there are women too; and a fellow-mortal hurled naked into it all! Jourgniac de Saint-Méard has seen battle, has seen an effervescent Regiment du Roi in mutiny; but the bravest heart may quail at this. The Swiss Prisoners, remnants of the Tenth of August,¹ "clasped each other spasmodically, and hung back; grey veterans crying: 'Mercy, Messieurs; ah, mercy!' But there was no mercy. Suddenly, however, one of these men steps forward. He had on a blue frock coat; he seemed about thirty, his stature was above common, his look noble and martial. 'I go first,' said he, 'since it must be so: adieu!' Then dashing his hat sharply behind him: 'Which way?' cried he to the Brigands: 'Show it me, then.' They open the folding gate; he is announced to the multitude. He stands a moment motionless; then plunges forth among the pikes, and dies of a thousand wounds."

Man after man is cut down; the sabres need sharpening, the killers refresh themselves from wine-jugs. Onward and onward goes the butchery; the loud yells wearying down into bass growls. A sombre-faced shifting multitude looks on; in dull approval, or dull disapproval; in dull recognition that it is Necessity. "An *Anglais* in drab greatcoat" was seen, or seemed to be seen, serving liquor from his own dram-bottle; — for what purpose, "if not set on by Pitt,"² Satan and himself know best! Witty Dr. Moore grew sick on approaching, and turned into another street. — Quick

¹ On August 10, 1792, the royal palace of the Tuileries was stormed by the Paris mob, and Louis was forced to flee to the Assembly for protection. The Swiss body-guard, who defended the palace, were massacred, except for these remnants who were imprisoned.

² William Pitt (1759-1806), prime minister of England, was supposed to be scattering lavish bribes in France to instigate the extremists to commit the excesses which dishonoured the revolution.

enough goes this Jury-Court; and rigorous. The brave are not spared, nor the beautiful, nor the weak. Old M. de Montmorin, the Minister's Brother, was acquitted by the Tribunal of the Seventeenth; and conducted back, elbowed by howling galleries; but is not acquitted here. Princess de Lamballe¹ has lain down on bed: "Madame, you are to be removed to the Abbaye." "I do not wish to remove; I am well enough here." There is a need-be for removing. She will arrange her dress a little, then; rude voices answer, "You have not far to go." She too is led to the hell-gate; a manifest Queen's-Friend. She shivers back, at the sight of bloody sabres; but there is no return: Onwards! That fair hind head is cleft with the axe; the neck is severed. That fair body is cut in fragments; with indignities, and obscene horrors of moustachio *grands-lèvres*, which human nature would fain find incredible, — which shall be read in the original language only. She was beautiful, she was good, she had known no happiness. Young hearts, generation after generation, will think with themselves: O worthy of worship, thou king-descended, god-descended, and poor sister-woman! why was I not there; and some Sword Balmung² or Thor's Hammer in my hand? Her head is fixed on a pike; paraded under the windows of the Temple; that a still more hated, a Marie Antoinette, may see. One Municipal, in the Temple³ with the Royal Prisoners at the moment, said, "Look out." Another eagerly whispered, "Do not look." The circuit of the Temple is guarded, in these hours, by a long stretched tricolor riband: terror enters and the clangour of infinite tumult; hitherto not regicide, though that too may come.

But it is more edifying to note what thrillings of affection, what fragments of wild virtues turn up in this shaking asunder of man's existence; for of these too there is a proportion. Note old Marquis Cazotte: he is doomed to die;

¹ The Princesse de Lamballe had returned from England. See p. 160, note 1.

² The sword of Siegfried in the *Nibelungenlied*.

³ The prison in which the King and royal family were confined.

but his young Daughter clasps him in her arms, with an inspiration of eloquence, with a love which is stronger than very death: the heart of the killers themselves is touched by it; the old man is spared. Yet he was guilty, if plotting for his King is guilt: in ten days more, a Court of Law condemned him, and he had to die elsewhere; bequeathing his Daughter a lock of his old grey hair. Or note old M. de Sombreuil, who also had a Daughter: — My Father is not an Aristocrat: O good gentlemen, I will swear it, and testify it, and in all ways prove it; we are not; we hate Aristocrats! “Wilt thou drink Aristocrats’ blood?” The man lifts blood (if universal Rumour can be credited); the poor maiden does drink. “This Sombreuil is innocent then!” Yes, indeed, — and now note, most of all, how the bloody pikes, at this news, do rattle to the ground; and the tiger-yells become bursts of jubilees over a brother saved; and the old man and his daughter are clasped to bloody bosoms, with hot tears; and borne home in triumph of *Vive la Nation*, the killers refusing even money! Does it seem strange, this temper of theirs? It seems very certain, well proved by Royalist testimony in other instances; and very significant.

BOOK II
REGICIDE
CHAPTER III

DISCROWNED

BUT the question more pressing than all on the Legislator, as yet, is this third: What shall be done with King Louis?

King Louis, now King and Majesty to his own family alone, in their own Prison Apartment alone, has been Louis Capet and the Traitor Veto¹ with the rest of France. Shut in his Circuit of the Temple, he has heard and seen the loud whirl of things; yells of September Massacres, Brunswick war-thunders dying off in disaster and discomfiture;² he passive, a spectator merely; waiting whither it would please to whirl with him. From the neighbouring windows, the curious, not without pity, might see him walk daily, at a certain hour, in the Temple Garden, with his Queen, Sister and two Children, all that now belongs to him in this Earth. Quietly he walks and waits; for he is not of lively feelings, and is of a devout heart. The wearied Irresolute has, at least, no need of resolving now. His daily meals, lessons to his Son, daily walk in the Garden, daily game at ombre or draughts, fill up the day: the morrow will provide for itself.

The morrow indeed; and yet How? Louis asks, How? France, with perhaps still more solicitude, asks, How? A King dethroned by insurrection is verily not easy to dispose of. Keep him prisoner, he is a secret centre for the Disaffected, for endless plots, attempts and hopes of theirs.

¹ The constitution had given the King the right of vetoing a law temporarily. It was his exercise of this veto power which heightened Louis' unpopularity and won for him the epithet "Veto."

² Referring to the invasion of the Prussian Duke of Brunswick in the summer of 1792.

Banish him, he is an open centre for them; his royal war-standard, with what of divinity it has, unrolls itself, summoning the world. Put him to death? A cruel questionable extremity that too: and yet the likeliest in these extreme circumstances, of insurrectionary men, whose own life and death lies staked: accordingly it is said, from the last step of the throne to the first of the scaffold there is short distance. . . .

CHAPTER VI

AT THE BAR

MEANWHILE, in a space of some five weeks, we have got to another emerging of the Trial, and a more practical one than ever.

On Tuesday, eleventh of December, the King's Trial has *emerged*, very decidedly: into the streets of Paris; in the shape of that green Carriage of Mayor Chambon, within which sits the King himself, with attendants, on his way to the Convention Hall! Attended, in that green carriage, by Mayors Chambon, Procureurs Chaumette; and outside of it by Commandants Santerre, with cannon, cavalry and double row of infantry; all Sections under arms, strong Patrols scouring all streets; so fares he, slowly through the dull drizzling weather: and about two o'clock we behold him, "in walnut-coloured greatcoat, *redingote noisette*," descending through the Place Vendôme, towards that Salle de Manège; to be indicted, and judicially interrogated. The mysterious Temple Circuit has given up its secret; which now, in this walnut-coloured coat, men behold with eyes. The same bodily Louis who was once Louis the Desired, fares there: hapless King, he is getting now towards port; his deplorable farings and voyagings draw to a close. What duty remains to him henceforth, that of placidly enduring, he is fit to do.

The singular Procession fares on; in silence, says Prudhomme, or amid growlings of the Marsillese Hymn; in silence, ushers itself into the Hall of the Convention, Santerre holding Louis's arm with his hand. Louis looks round

him, with composed air, to see what kind of Convention and Parliament it is. Much changed indeed:—since February gone two years, when our Constituent, then busy, spread fleur-de-lis velvet for us: and we came over to say a kind word here, and they all started up swearing Fidelity; and all France started up swearing, and made it a Feast of Pikes; which has ended in this! Barrère, who once “wept” looking up from his Editor’s Desk, looks down now from his President’s-Chair, with a list of Fifty-seven Questions; and says, dry-eyed: “Louis, you may sit down.” Louis sits down: it is the very seat they say, same timber and stuffing, from which he accepted the Constitution, amid dancing and illumination, autumn gone a year. So much woodwork remains identical; so much else is not identical. Louis sits and listens, with a composed look and mind.

Of the Fifty-seven Questions we shall not give so much as one. They are questions captiously embracing all the main Documents seized on the Tenth of August, or found lately in the Iron Press;¹ embracing all the main incidents of the Revolution History; and they ask, in substance, this: Louis, who wert King, art thou not guilty to a certain extent, by act and written document, of trying to continue King? Neither in the answers is there much notable. Mere quiet negations, for most part; an accused man standing on the simple basis of *No*: I do not recognize that document; I did not do that act; or did it according to the law that then was. Whereupon the Fifty-seven Questions, and Documents to the number of a Hundred and Sixty-two, being exhausted in this manner, Barrère finishes, after some three hours, with his: “Louis, I invite you to withdraw.”

Louis withdraws, under Municipal escort, into a neighboring Committee-room; having first, in leaving the bar, demanded to have Legal Counsel. He declines refreshment, in this Committee-room; then, seeing Chaumette busy with a small loaf which a grenadier had divided with him, says,

¹ A search in the Tuileries brought to light an iron box, in which was concealed the royal correspondence which indicated that the court had been in league with the foreign enemies of France.

he will take a bit of bread. It is five o'clock; and he had breakfasted but slightly, in a morning of such drumming and alarm. Chaumette breaks his half-loaf: the King eats of the crust; mounts the green Carriage, eating; asks now, What he shall do with the crumb? Chaumette's clerk takes it from him; flings it out into the street. Louis says, It is pity to fling out bread, in a time of dearth. "My grandmother," remarks Chaumette, "used to say to me, Little boy, never waste a crumb of bread; you cannot make one." "Monsieur Chaumette," answers Louis, "your grandmother seems to have been a sensible woman." Poor innocent mortal; so quietly he waits the drawing of the lot; — fit to do this at least well; Passivity alone, without Activity, sufficing for it! He talks once of travelling over France by and by, to have a geographical and topographical view of it; being from of old fond of geography. — The Temple Circuit again receives him, closes on him; gazing Paris may retire to its hearths and coffeehouses, to its clubs and theatres: the damp darkness has sunk, and with it the drumming and patrolling of this strange Day.

Louis is now separated from his Queen and Family; given up to his simple reflections and resources. Dull lie these stone walls round him; of his loved ones none with him. "In this state of uncertainty," providing for the worst, he writes his Will: a Paper which can still be read; full of placidity, simplicity, pious sweetness. The Convention, after debate, has granted him Legal Counsel, of his own choosing. Advocate Target feels himself "too old," being turned of fifty-four; and declines. He had gained great honour once, defending Rohan the Necklace-Cardinal; but will gain none here. Advocate Tronchet, some ten years older, does not decline. Nay behold, good old Malesherbes steps forward voluntarily; to the last of his fields, the good old hero! He is grey with seventy years: he says, "I was twice called to the Council of him who was my Master, when all the world coveted that honour; and I owe him the same service now, when it has become one which many

reckon dangerous." These two, with a younger Desèze, whom they will select for pleading, are busy over that Fifty-and-sevenfold Indictment, over the Hundred and Sixty-two Documents; Louis aiding them as he can. . . .

CHAPTER VII

THE THREE VOTINGS

Is Louis Capet guilty of conspiring against Liberty? Shall our Sentence be itself final, or need ratifying by Appeal to the People? If guilty, what Punishment? This is the form agreed to, after uproar and "several hours of tumultuous indecision:" these are the Three successive Questions, whereon the Convention shall now pronounce. Paris floods round their Hall; multitudinous, many-sounding. Europe and all Nations listen for their answer. Deputy after Deputy shall answer to his name: Guilty or Not guilty?

As to the Guilt, there is, as above hinted, no doubt in the mind of Patriot men. Overwhelming majority pronounces Guilt; the unanimous Convention votes for Guilt, only some feeble twenty-eight voting not Innocence, but refusing to vote at all. Neither does the Second Question prove doubtful, whatever the Girondins¹ might calculate. Would not Appeal to the People be another name for civil war? Majority of two to one answers that there shall be no Appeal: this also is settled. Loud Patriotism, now at ten o'clock, may hush itself for the night; and retire to its bed not without hope. Tuesday has gone well. On the morrow comes, What Punishment? On the morrow is the tug of war.

Consider therefore if, on this Wednesday morning, there is an affluence of Patriotism; if Paris stands a-tiptoe, and all Deputies are at their post! Seven-hundred and Forty-

¹ The moderate party in the Convention, which was opposed to the radical deputies from Paris; it desired that the influence of the provinces should not be dominated by that of the capital, and wished the country as a whole to decide upon Louis' fate. The party took its name from the province of the Gironde, which was represented by the leaders of the party.

nine honourable Deputies; only some twenty absent on mission, Duchâtel and some seven others absent by sickness. Meanwhile expectant Patriotism and Paris standing a-tiptoe, have need of patience. For this Wednesday again passes in debate and effervescence; Girondins proposing that a "majority of three-fourths" shall be required; Patriots fiercely resisting them. Danton, who has just got back from mission in the Netherlands, does obtain "order of the day" on this Girondin proposal; nay he obtains further that we decide *sans désenparer*, in Permanent-session, till we have done.

And so, finally, at eight in the evening this Third stupendous Voting, by roll-call or *appel nominal*, does begin. What Punishment? Girondins undecided, Patriots decided, men afraid of Royalty, men afraid of Anarchy, must answer here and now. Infinite Patriotism, dusky in the lamp-light, floods all corridors, crowds all galleries; sternly waiting to hear. Shrill-sounding Ushers summon you by Name and Department; you must rise to the Tribune, and say.

Eye-witnesses have represented this scene of the Third Voting, and of the votings that grew out of it; a scene protracted, like to be endless, lasting, with few brief intervals, from Wednesday till Sunday morning,—as one of the strangest seen in the Revolution. Long night wears itself into day, morning's paleness is spread over all faces; and again the wintry shadows sink, and the dim lamps are lit: but through day and night and the vicissitudes of hours, Member after Member is mounting continually those Tribune-steps; pausing aloft there, in the clearer upper light, to speak his Fate-word; then diving down into the dusk and throng again. Like Phantoms in the hour of midnight; most spectral, pandemonial! Never did President Vergniaud, or any terrestrial President, superintend the like. A King's Life, and so much else that depends thereon, hangs trembling in the balance. Man after man mounts; the buzz hushes itself till he have spoken: Death; Banishment; Imprisonment till the Peace. Many say Death; with what cautious well-studied phrases and paragraphs they could

devise, of explanation, of enforcement, of faint recommendation to mercy. Many too say, Banishment; something short of Death. The balance trembles, none can yet guess whitherward. Whereat anxious Patriotism bellows; irrepressible by Ushers.

The poor Girondins, many of them, under such fierce bellowing of Patriotism, say Death; justifying, *motivant*, that most miserable word of theirs by some brief casuistry and jesuitry. Vergniaud himself says, Death; justifying by jesuitry. Rich Lepelletier Saint-Fargeau had been of the Noblesse, and then of the Patriot Left Side, in the Constituent; and had argued and reported, there and elsewhere, not a little, *against* Capital Punishment: nevertheless he now says, Death; a word which may cost him dear. Manuel did surely rank with the Decided in August last; but he has been sinking and backsliding ever since September and the scenes of September. In this Convention, above all, no word he could ever speak would find favour; he says now, Banishment; and in mute wrath quits the place for ever, — much hustled in the corridors. Philippe Égalité¹ votes, in his soul and conscience, Death: at the sound of which and of whom, even Patriotism shakes its head; and there runs a groan and shudder through this Hall of Doom. Robespierre's vote cannot be doubtful; his speech is long. Men see the figure of shrill Sieyes ascend; hardly pausing, passing merely, this figure says, "*La Mort sans phrase*, Death without phrases;" and fares onward and downward. Most spectral, pandemonial!

And yet if the Reader fancy it of a funereal, sorrowful or even grave character, he is far mistaken: "the Ushers in the Mountain² quarter," says Mercier, "had become as Box-keepers at the Opera;" opening and shutting of Galleries for privileged persons, for "D'Orléans Égalité's mistresses,"

¹ See p. 69, note 2.

² The radical party in the Convention was called the Mountain because it occupied the upper tier of seats on the left of the hall. Determined upon the death of the King, it made the process of conviction a scene of wild gaiety.

or other high-dizened women of condition, rustling with laces and tricolor. Gallant Deputies pass and repass thitherward, treating them with ices, refreshments and small-talk; the high-dizened heads beck responsive; some have their card and pin, pricking down the Ayes and Noes, as at a game of *Rouge-et-Noir*. Further aloft reigns Mère Duchesse with her unrouted Amazons; she cannot be prevented making long *Hahas*, when the vote is not *La Mort*. In these Galleries there is refection, drinking of wine and brandy "as in open tavern, *en pleine tabagie*." Betting goes on in all coffee-houses of the neighbourhood. But within doors, fatigue, impatience, uttermost weariness sits now on all visages; lighted up only from time to time by turns of the game. Members have fallen asleep; Ushers come and awaken them to vote: other Members calculate whether they shall not have time to run and dine. Figures rise, like phantoms, pale in the dusky lamp-light: utter from this Tribune, only one word: Death. "*Tout est optique*," says Mercier, "The world is all an optical shadow." Deep in the Thursday night, when the Voting is done, and Secretaries are summing it up, sick Duchâtel, more spectral than another, comes borne on a chair, wrapt in blankets, in "nightgown and nightcap," to vote for Mercy: one vote it is thought may turn the scale.

Ah no! In profoundest silence, President Vergniaud, with a voice full of sorrow, has to say: "I declare, in the name of the Convention, that the punishment it pronounces on Louis Capet is that of Death." Death by a small majority of Fifty-three. Nay, if we deduct from the one side, and add to the other, a certain Twenty-six, who said Death but coupled some faintest ineffectual surmise of mercy with it, the majority will be but *One*.

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CHAPTER VIII

PLACE DE LA REVOLUTION

To this conclusion, then, hast thou come, O hapless Louis! The Son of Sixty Kings is to die on the Scaffold by form of Law. Under Sixty Kings this same form of Law, form of Society, has been fashioning itself together, these thousand years; and has become, one way and other, a most strange Machine. Surely, if needful, it is also frightful, this Machine; dead, blind; not what it should be; which, with swift stroke, or by cold slow torture, has wasted the lives and souls of innumerable men. And behold now a King himself, or say rather Kinghood in his person, is to expire here in cruel tortures; — like a Phalaris¹ shut in the belly of his own red-heated Brazen Bull! It is ever so; and thou shouldst know it, O haughty tyrannous man: injustice breeds injustice; curses and falsehoods do verily return “always *home*,” wide as they may wander. Innocent Louis bears the sins of many generations: he too experiences that man’s tribunal is not in this Earth; that if he had no Higher one, it were not well with him.

A King dying by such violence appeals impressively to the imagination; as the like must do, and ought to do. And yet at bottom it is not the King dying, but the man! Kingship is a coat: the grand loss is of the skin. The man from whom you take his Life, to him can the whole combined world do *more*? Lally went on his hurdle; his mouth filled with a gag. Miserablest mortals, doomed for picking pockets, have a whole five-act Tragedy in them, in that dumb pain, as they go to the gallows, unregarded; they consume the cup of trembling down to the lees. For Kings and for Beggars, for the justly doomed and the unjustly, it is a hard thing to die. Pity them all: thy utmost pity, with all aids and appliances and throne-and-scaffold contrasts, how far short is it of the thing pitied!

¹ A Sicilian tyrant, noted for his cruelty, who roasted his victims in a bull of bronze. Overthrown at last, he was himself tortured to death in the same fashion.

A Confessor has come; Abbé Edgeworth, of Irish extraction, whom the King knew by good report, has come promptly on this solemn mission. Leave the Earth alone, then, thou hapless King; it with its malice will go its way, thou also canst go thine. A hard scene yet remains: the parting with our loved ones. Kind hearts, environed in the same grim peril with us; to be left *here!* Let the Reader look with the eyes of Valet Cléry, through these glass-doors, where also the Municipality watches; and see the cruellest of scenes:

“At half-past eight the door of the ante-room opened: the Queen appeared first, leading her Son by the hand; then Madame Royale and Madame Elizabeth: they all flung themselves into the arms of the King. Silence reigned for some minutes; interrupted only by sobs. The Queen made a movement to lead his Majesty towards the inner room, where M. Edgeworth was waiting unknown to them: ‘No,’ said the King, ‘let us go into the dining-room, it is there only that I can see you.’ They entered there; I shut the door of it, which was of glass. The King sat down, the Queen on his left hand, Madame Elizabeth on his right, Madame Royale almost in front; the young Prince remained standing between his Father’s legs. They all leaned towards him, and often held him embraced. This scene of woe lasted an hour and three quarters; during which we could hear nothing; we could see only that always when the King spoke, the sobbings of the Princesses redoubled, continued for some minutes; and that then the King began again to speak.” — And so our meetings and our partings do now end! The sorrows we gave each other; the poor joys we faithfully shared, and all our lovings and our sufferings, and confused toilings under the earthly Sun, are over. Thou good soul, I shall never, never through all ages of Time, see thee any more! — NEVER! O Reader, knowest thou that hard word?

For nearly two hours this agony lasts; then they tear themselves asunder. “Promise that you will see us on the morrow.” He promises: — Ah yes, yes; yet once; and go now, ye loved ones; cry to God for yourselves and me! —

It was a hard scene, but it is over. He will not see them on the morrow. The Queen, in passing through the ante-room, glanced at the Cerberus Municipals; and, with woman's vehemence, said through her tears, "*Vous êtes tous des scélérats.*"¹

King Louis slept sound, till five in the morning, when Cléry, as he had been ordered, awoke him. Cléry dressed his hair: while this went forward, Louis took a ring from his watch, and kept trying it on his finger; it was his wedding-ring, which he is now to return to the Queen as a mute farewell. At half-past six, he took the Sacrament; and continued in devotion, and conference with Abbé Edgeworth. He will not see his Family: it were too hard to bear.

At eight, the Municipals enter: the King gives them his Will, and messages and effects; which they, at first, brutally refuse to take charge of: he gives them a roll of gold pieces, a hundred and twenty-five louis; these are to be returned to Malesherbes, who had lent them. At nine, Santerre says the hour is come. The King begs yet to retire for three minutes. At the end of three minutes, Santerre again says the hour is come. "Stamping on the ground with his right foot, Louis answers: '*Partons, Let us go.*'" — How the rolling of those drums comes in, through the Temple bastions and bulwarks, on the heart of a queenly wife; soon to be a widow! He is gone, then, and has not seen us? A Queen weeps bitterly; a King's Sister and Children. Over all these Four does Death also hover: all shall perish miserably save one; she, as Duchesse d'Angoulême, will live, — not happily.

At the Temple Gate were some faint cries, perhaps from voices of pitiful women: "*Grâce! Grâce!*" Through the rest of the streets there is silence as of the grave. No man not armed is allowed to be there: the armed, did any even pity, dare not express it, each man overawed by all his neighbours. All windows are down, none seen looking through them. All shops are shut. No wheel-carriage rolls, this morning, in these streets but one only. Eighty-

¹ "You are scoundrels, all of you."

thousand armed men stand ranked, like armed statues of men; cannons bristle, cannoneers with match burning, but no word or movement: it is as a city enchanted into silence and stone: one carriage with its escort, slowly rumbling, is the only sound. Louis reads, in his Book of Devotion, the Prayers of the Dying: clatter of this death-march falls sharp on the ear, in the great silence; but the thought would fain struggle heavenward, and forget the Earth.

As the clocks strike ten, behold the Place de la Révolution, once Place de Louis Quinze; the Guillotine, mounted near the old Pedestal where once stood the Statue of that Louis! Far round, all bristles with cannons and armed men: spectators crowding in the rear; D'Orléans Égalité there in cabriolet. Swift messengers, *hoquetons*, speed to the Town-hall, every three minutes: near by is the Convention sitting, — vengeful for Lepelletier. Heedless of all, Louis reads his Prayers of the Dying; not till five minutes yet has he finished; then the Carriage opens. What temper he is in? Ten different witnesses will give ten different accounts of it. He is in the collision of all tempers; arrived now at the black Mahlstrom and descent of Death: in sorrow, in indignation, in resignation struggling to be resigned. "Take care of M. Edgeworth," he straitly charges the Lieutenant who is sitting with them: then they two descend.

The drums are beating: "*Taisez-vous*, Silence!" he cries "in a terrible voice, *d'une voix terrible*." He mounts the scaffold, not without delay; he is in puce coat, breeches of grey, white stockings. He strips off the coat; stands disclosed in a sleeve-waistcoat of white flannel. The Executioners approach to bind him: he spurns, resists; Abbé Edgeworth has to remind him how the Saviour, in whom men trust, submitted to be bound. His hands are tied, his head bare; the fatal moment is come. He advances to the edge of the Scaffold, "his face very red," and says: "Frenchmen, I die innocent: it is from the Scaffold and near appearing before God that I tell you so. I pardon my enemies; I desire that France——" A General on horseback, Santerre or another, prances out, with uplifted hand: "*Tambours!*"

The drums drown the voice. "Executioners, do your duty!" The Executioners, desperate lest themselves be murdered (for Santerre and his Armed Ranks will strike, if they do not), seize the hapless Louis: six of them desperate, him singly desperate, struggling there; and bind him to their plank. Abbé Edgeworth, stooping, bespeaks him: "Son of Saint Louis, ascend to Heaven." The Axe clanks down; a King's Life is shorn away. It is Monday the 21st of January 1793. He was aged Thirty-eight years four months and twenty-eight days.

Executioner Samson shows the Head: fierce shout of *Vive la République* rises and swells; caps raised on bayonets, hats waving: students of the College of Four Nations take it up, on the far Quais; fling it over Paris. D'Orléans drives off in his cabriolet: the Townhall Councillors rub their hands, saying, "It is done, It is done." There is dipping of handkerchiefs, of pike-points in the blood. Headsman Samson, though he afterwards denied it, sells locks of the hair: fractions of the puce coat are long after worn in rings. — And so, in some half-hour it is done; and the multitude has all departed. Pastry-cooks, coffee-sellers, milkmen sing out their trivial quotidian cries: the world wags on, as if this were a common day. In the coffee-houses that evening, says Prudhomme, Patriot shook hands with Patriot in a more cordial manner than usual. Not till some days after, according to Mercier, did public men see what a grave thing it was. . . .

At home this Killing of a King has divided all friends; and abroad it has united all enemies. Fraternity of Peoples, Revolutionary Propagandism; Atheism, Regicide; total destruction of social order in this world! All Kings, and lovers of Kings, and haters of Anarchy, rank in coalition; as in a war for life. England signifies to Citizen Chauvelin, the Ambassador or rather Ambassador's-Cloak, that he must quit the country in eight days. Ambassador's-Cloak and Ambassador, Chauvelin and Talleyrand, depart accordingly. Talleyrand, implicated in that Iron Press of the Tuileries, thinks it safest to make for America.

England has cast out the Embassy: England declares war, — being shocked principally, it would seem, at the condition of the River Scheldt. Spain declares war; being shocked principally at some other thing; which doubtless the Manifesto indicates. Nay we find it was not England that declared war first, or Spain first; but that France herself declared war first on both of them; — a point of immense Parliamentary and Journalistic interest in those days, but which has become of no interest whatever in these. They all declare war. The sword is drawn, the scabbard thrown away. It is even as Danton said, in one of his all-too gigantic figures: "The coalized Kings threaten us; we hurl at their feet, as gage of battle, the Head of a King."

[The execution of Louis XVI was the first act in the conflict of the two parties, the Mountain and the Girondins. It was a victory for the former. The leaders of the Mountain had wanted to kill the King in order to prevent any backsliding, to force everybody pretending to play a part in the revolution to receive the baptism of blood, and to render any compromise between Europe and revolutionary France impossible. The Girondins hoped secretly to acquit Louis, but when it came to the trial, in order to preserve their credit with the mob, they were forced to abandon their attitude of clemency. Even by voting for the death of the King, they forfeited their popularity, since it was clear that they agreed to the death sentence by capitulation, and the reluctance of their capitulation lost them all prestige, influence, and power.]

During the spring of 1793, the hatred of the Paris mob swelled against the Girondins, who were bitterly assailed in the Convention by Marat and Robespierre. The suspicion that they were treacherous to the new republic increased and was transformed into certainty by the desertion of the Girondin general, Dumouriez, to the Austrians. On the 2nd of June the mob, incited by Marat, forced the Convention to expel and imprison the Girondin leaders.

Some of them made their escape, however, and began to organize a revolt in the provinces against the domination of the Paris mob, which was controlled by Marat and the Mountain party. The most important centre of the Girondin revolt was at Caen, in Normandy.]

BOOK IV TERROR

CHAPTER I

CHARLOTTE CORDAY

... Amid which dim ferment of Caen and the World, History specially notices one thing: in the lobby of the Mansion *de l'Intendance*, where busy Deputies are coming and going, a young Lady with an aged valet, taking grave graceful leave of Deputy Barbaroux.¹ She is of stately Norman figure; in her twenty-fifth year; of beautiful still countenance: her name is Charlotte Corday, heretofore styled D'Armans, while Nobility still was. Barbaroux has given her a Note to Deputy Duperret, — him who once drew his sword in the effervescence. Apparently she will to Paris on some errand? "She was a Republican before the Revolution, and never wanted energy." A completeness, a decision is in this fair female Figure: "by energy she means the spirit that will prompt one to sacrifice himself for his country." What if she, this fair young Charlotte, had emerged from her secluded stillness, suddenly like a Star; cruel-lovely, with half-angelic, half-daemonic splendour; to gleam for a moment, and in a moment be extinguished: to be held in memory, so bright complete was she, through long centuries! — Quitting Cimmerian Coalitions without, and the dim-simmering Twenty-five millions within, History will look fixedly at this one fair Apparition of a Charlotte Corday; will note whither Charlotte moves, how the little Life burns forth so radiant, then vanishes swallowed of the Night.

With Barbaroux's Note of Introduction, and slight stock

¹ One of the Girondin leaders who had fled to Caen to organize revolt against the Mountain.

of luggage, we see Charlotte on Tuesday the ninth of July seated in the Caen Diligence, with a place for Paris. None takes farewell of her, wishes her Good-journey: her Father will find a line left, signifying that she is gone to England, that he must pardon her, and forget her. The drowsy Diligence lumbers along; amid drowsy talk of Politics, and praise of the Mountain; in which she mingles not: all night, all day, and again all night. On Thursday, not long before noon, we are at the bridge of Neuilly; here is Paris with her thousand black domes, the goal and purpose of thy journey! Arrived at the Inn de la Providence in the Rue des Vieux Augustins, Charlotte demands a room; hastens to bed; sleeps all afternoon and night, till the morrow morning.

On the morrow morning, she delivers her Note to Duperret. It relates to certain Family Papers which are in the Minister of the Interior's hand; which a Nun at Caen, an old Convent friend of Charlotte's, has need of; which Duperret shall assist her in getting: this then was Charlotte's errand to Paris? She has finished this, in the course of Friday; — yet says nothing of returning. She has seen and silently investigated several things. The Convention, in bodily reality, she has seen; what the Mountain is like. The living physiognomy of Marat she could not see; he is sick at present, and confined to home.

About eight on the Saturday morning, she purchases a large sheath-knife in the Palais Royal; then straightway, in the Place des Victoires, takes a hackney-coach: "To the Rue de l'Ecole de Médecine, No. 44." It is the residence of the Citoyen Marat! — The Citoyen Marat is ill, and cannot be seen; which seems to disappoint her much. Her business is with Marat, then? Hapless beautiful Charlotte; hapless squalid Marat! From Caen in the utmost West, from Neuchâtel in the utmost East, they two are drawing nigh each other; they two have, very strangely, business together. — Charlotte, returning to her Inn, dispatches a short Note to Marat; signifying that she is from Caen, the seat of rebellion; that she desires earnestly to see him, and "will put it in his power to do France a great service." No

answer. Charlotte writes another Note, still more pressing; sets out with it by coach, about seven in the evening, herself. Tired day labourers have again finished their Week; huge Paris is circling and simmering, manifold, according to its vague wont: this one fair Figure has decision in it; drives straight — towards a purpose.

It is yellow July evening, we say, the thirteenth of the month; eve of the Bastille day, — when “M. Marat,” four years ago, in the crowd of the Pont Neuf, shrewdly required of that Besenval Hussar-party, which had such friendly dispositions, “to dismount, and give up their arms, then;” and became notable among Patriot men. Four years: what a road he has travelled; — and sits now, about half-past seven of the clock, stewing in slipper-bath; sore afflicted; ill of Revolution Fever, — of what other malady this History had rather not name. Excessively sick and worn, poor man: with precisely eleven-pence-halfpenny of ready money, in paper; with slipper-bath; strong three-footed stool for writing on, the while; and a squalid — Washerwoman, one may call her: that is his civic establishment in Medical-School Street; thither and not elsewhither has his road led him. Not to the reign of Brotherhood and Perfect Felicity; yet surely on the way towards that? — Hark, a rap again! A musical woman’s voice, refusing to be rejected: it is the Citoyenne who would do France a service. Marat, recognizing from within, cries, Admit her. Charlotte Corday is admitted.

Citoyen Marat, I am from Caen the seat of rebellion, and wished to speak with you. — Be seated, *mon enfant*. Now what are the Traitors doing at Caen? What Deputies are at Caen? — Charlotte names some Deputies. “Their heads shall fall within a fortnight,” croaks the eager People’s-friend, clutching his tablets to write: *Barbaroux*, *Pétion*, writes he with bare shrunk arm, turning aside in the bath: *Pétion*, and *Louvet*, and — Charlotte has drawn her knife from the sheath; plunges it, with one sure stroke, into the writer’s heart. “*À moi, chère amie*, Help, dear!” no more could the Death-choked say or shriek. The helpful Washer-

woman running in, there is no Friend of the People, or Friend of the Washerwoman left; but his life with a groan gushes out, indignant, to the shades below.

And so Marat People's-friend is ended; the lone Stylites has got hurled down suddenly from his pillar — *whitherward* He that made him knows. Patriot Paris may sound triple and tenfold in dole and wail; re-echoed by Patriot France; and the Convention "Chabot pale with terror, declaring that they are to be all assassinated," may decree him Pantheon Honours, Public Funeral, Mirabeau's dust making way for him; and Jacobin Societies, in lamentable oratory, summing up his character, parallel him to One, whom they think it honour to call "the good Sansculotte," — whom we name not here; also a Chapel may be made, for the urn that holds his Heart, in the Place du Carrousel; and new-born children be named Marat; and Lago-di-Como Hawkers bake mountains of stucco into unbeautiful Busts; and David paint his Picture, or Death-Scene; and such other Apotheosis take place as the human genius, in these circumstances, can devise: but Marat returns no more to the light of this Sun. One sole circumstance we have read with clear sympathy, in the old *Moniteur* Newspaper: how Marat's Brother comes from Neuchâtel to ask of the Convention, "that the deceased Jean-Paul Marat's musket be given him." For Marat too had a brother, and natural affections; and was wrapt once in swaddling-clothes, and slept safe in a cradle like the rest of us. Ye children of men! — A sister of his, they say, lives still to this day in Paris.

As for Charlotte Corday, her work is accomplished; the recompense of it is near and sure. The *chère amie*, and neighbours of the house, flying at her, she "overturns some movables," entrenches herself till the gendarmes arrive; then quietly surrenders; goes quietly to the Abbaye Prison: she alone quiet, all Paris sounding, in wonder, in rage or admiration, round her. Duperret is put in arrest, on account of her; his Papers sealed, — which may lead to consequences. Fauchet in like manner; though Fauchet had not so much as heard of her. Charlotte, confronted with these two

Deputies, praises the grave firmness of Duperret, censures the dejection of Fauchet.

On Wednesday morning, the thronged Palais de Justice and Revolutionary Tribunal can see her face; beautiful and calm: she dates it "fourth day of the Preparation of Peace." A strange murmur ran through the Hall, at sight of her; you could not say of what character. Tinville¹ has his indictments and tape-papers: the cutler of the Palais Royal will testify that he sold her the sheath-knife; "All these details are needless," interrupted Charlotte; "it is I that killed Marat." By whose instigation? — "By no one's." What tempted you, then? His crimes. "I killed one man," added she, raising her voice extremely (*extrêmement*), as they went on with their questions, "I killed one man to save a hundred thousand; a villain to save innocents; a savage wild-beast to give repose to my country. I was a Republican before the Revolution; I never wanted energy." There is therefore nothing to be said. The public gazes astonished: the hasty limners sketch her features, Charlotte not disapproving: the men of law proceed with their formalities. The doom is Death as a murderess. To her Advocate she gives thanks; in gentle phrase, in high-flown classical spirit. To the Priest they send her she gives thanks; but needs not any shriving, any ghostly or other aid from him.

On this same evening therefore, about half-past seven o'clock, from the gate of the Conciergerie, to a City all on tiptoe, the fatal Cart issues; seated on it a fair young creature, sheeted in red smock of Murderess; so beautiful, serene, so full of life; journeying towards death, — alone amid the World. Many take off their hats, saluting reverently; for what heart but must be touched? Others growl and howl. Adam Lux, of Mentz, declares that she is greater than Brutus; that it were beautiful to die with her: the head of

¹ Fouquier-Tinville (1747-1795) was the public prosecutor to the revolutionary tribunal, an office which he discharged with successful vigor. He rarely failed to obtain from the judges the sentence of capital punishment, which he always demanded.

this young man seems turned. At the Place de la Révolution, the countenance of Charlotte wears the same still smile. The executioners proceed to bind her feet; she resists, thinking it meant as an insult; on a word of explanation, she submits with cheerful apology. As the last act, all being now ready, they take the neckerchief from her neck; a blush of maidenly shame overspreads that fair face and neck; the cheeks were still tinged with it when the executioner lifted the severed head, to show it to the people. "It is most true," says Forster, "that he struck the cheek insultingly; for I saw it with my eyes: the Police imprisoned him for it."

In this manner have the Beautifullest and the Squalidest come in collision, and extinguished one another. Jean-Paul Marat and Marie-Anne Charlotte Corday both, suddenly, are no more. "Day of the Preparation of Peace?" Alas, how were peace possible or preparable, while, for example, the hearts of lovely Maidens, in their convent-stillness, are dreaming not of Love-paradises, and the light of Life; but of Codrus'-sacrifices, and Death well-earned? That Twenty-five million hearts have got to such temper, this *is* the Anarchy; the soul of it lies in this: whereof not peace can be the embodiment! The death of Marat, whetting old animosities tenfold, will be worse than any life. O ye hapless Two, mutually extinctive, the Beautiful and the Squalid, sleep ye well, — in the Mother's bosom that bore you both!

This is the history of Charlotte Corday; most definite, most complete; angelic-daemonic: like a Star! Adam Lux goes home, half-delirious; to pour forth his Apotheosis of her, in paper and print; to propose that she have a statue with this inscription, *Greater than Brutus*. Friends represent his danger: Lux is reckless; thinks it were beautiful to die with her.

CHAPTER VII

MARIE-ANTOINETTE

ON Monday the Fourteenth of October 1793, a Cause is pending in the Palais de Justice, in the new Revolutionary Court, such as these old stone-walls never witnessed: the Trial of Marie-Antoinette. The once brightest of Queens, now tarnished, defaced, forsaken, stands here at Fouquier-Tinville's Judgement-bar; answering for her life. The Indictment was delivered her last night. To such changes of human fortune what words are adequate? Silence alone is adequate.

There are few Printed things one meets with of such tragic, almost ghastly, significance as those bald Pages of the *Bulletin du Tribunal Révolutionnaire*, which bear title, *Trial of the Widow Capet*. Dim, dim, as if in disastrous eclipse; like the pale kingdoms of Dis! Plutonic Judges, Plutonic Tinville; encircled, nine times, with Styx and Lethe, with Fire-Phlegethon and Cocytus named of Lamentation! The very witnesses summoned are like Ghosts: exculpatory, inculpatory, they themselves are all hovering over death and doom; they are known, in our imagination, as the prey of the Guillotine. Tall *ci-devant* Count d'Estaing, anxious to show himself Patriot, cannot escape; nor Bailly, who, when asked If he knows the Accused, answers with a reverent inclination towards her, "Ah, yes, I know Madame." Ex-Patriots are here, sharply dealt with, as Procureur Manuel; Ex-Ministers, shorn of their splendour. We have cold Aristocratic impassivity, faithful to itself even in Tartarus; rabid stupidity, of Patriot Corporals, Patriot Washerwomen, who have much to say of plots, Treasons, August Tenth, old Insurrection of Women. For all now has become a crime, in her who has *lost*.

Marie-Antoinette, in this her utter abandonment, and hour of extreme need, is not wanting to herself, the imperial woman. Her look, they say, as that hideous Indictment was reading, continued calm; "she was sometimes observed

moving her fingers, as when one plays on the piano." You discern, not without interest, across that dim Revolutionary Bulletin itself, how she bears herself queenlike. Her answers are prompt, clear, often of Laconic brevity; resolution, which has grown contemptuous without ceasing to be dignified, veils itself in calm words. "You persist, then, in denial?" — "My plan is not denial: it is the truth I have said, and I persist in that." Scandalous Hébert has borne his testimony as to many things: as to one thing, concerning Marie-Antoinette and her little Son, — wherewith Human Speech had better not further be soiled. She has answered Hébert; a Juryman begs to observe that she has not answered as to *this*. "I have not answered," she exclaims with noble emotion, "because Nature refuses to answer such a charge brought against a Mother. I appeal to all the Mothers that are here." Robespierre, when he heard of it, broke out into something almost like swearing at the brutish blockheadism of this Hébert; on whose foul head his foul lie has recoiled. At four o'clock on Wednesday morning, after two days and two nights of interrogating, jury-charging, and other darkening of counsel, the result comes out: sentence of Death. "Have you anything to say?" The Accused shook her head, without speech. Night's candles are burning out; and with her too Time is finishing, and it will be Eternity and Day. This Hall of Tinville's is dark, ill-lighted except where she stands. Silently she withdraws from it, to die.

Two Processions, or Royal Progresses, three-and-twenty years apart, have often struck us with a strange feeling of contrast. The first is of a beautiful Archduchess and Dauphiness, quitting her Mother's City, at the age of Fifteen; towards hopes such as no other Daughter of Eve then had: "On the morrow," says Weber, an eye-witness, "the Dauphiness left Vienna. The whole city crowded out; at first with a sorrow which was silent. She appeared: you saw her sunk back into her carriage; her face bathed in tears; hiding her eyes now with her handkerchief, now with her hands; several times putting out her head to see

yet again this Palace of her Fathers, whither she was to return no more. She motioned her regret, her gratitude to the good Nation, which was crowding here to bid her farewell. Then arose not only tears; but piercing cries, on all sides. Men and women alike abandoned themselves to such expression of their sorrow. It was an audible sound of wail, in the streets and avenues of Vienna. The last Courier that followed her disappeared, and the crowd melted away."

The young imperial Maiden of Fifteen has now become a worn discrowned Widow of Thirty-eight; grey before her time: this is the last Procession: "Few minutes after the Trial ended, the drums were beating to arms in all Sections; at sunrise the armed force was on foot, cannons getting placed at the extremities of the Bridges, in the Squares, Crossways, all along from the Palais de Justice to the Place de la Révolution. By ten o'clock, numerous patrols were circulating in the Streets; thirty thousand foot and horse drawn up under arms. At eleven, Marie-Antoinette was brought out. She had on an undress of *piqué blanc*: she was led to the place of execution, in the same manner as an ordinary criminal; bound, on a Cart; accompanied by a Constitutional Priest in Lay dress; escorted by numerous detachments of infantry and cavalry. These, and the double row of troops all along the road, she appeared to regard with indifference. On her countenance there was visible neither abashment nor pride. To the cries of *Vive la République* and *Down with Tyranny*, which attended her all the way, she seemed to pay no heed. She spoke little to her Confessor. The tricolor Streamers on the house-tops occupied her attention, in the Streets du Roule and Saint-Honoré; she also noticed the Inscriptions on the house-fronts. On reaching the Place de la Révolution, her looks turned towards the *Jardin National*, whilom Tuileries; her face at that moment gave signs of lively emotion. She mounted the Scaffold with courage enough; at a quarter past Twelve, her head fell; the Executioner showed it to the people, amid universal long-continued cries of *Vive la République*."

VOLUME III — BOOK V

CHAPTER II

DEATH

IN the early days of November, there is one transient glimpse of things that is to be noted: the last transit to his long home of Philippe d'Orléans Égalité. Philippe was "decreed accused," along with the Girondins, much to his and their surprise; but not tried along with them. They are doomed and dead, some three days, when Philippe, after his long half-year of durance at Marseilles, arrives in Paris. It is, as we calculate, the third of November 1793.

On which same day, two notable Female Prisoners are also put in ward there: Dame Dubarry, and Josephine Beauharnais. Dame whilom Countess Dubarry, Unfortunate-female, had returned from London; they snatched her, not only as Ex-harlot of a whilom Majesty, and therefore suspect; but as having "furnished the Emigrants with money." Contemporaneously with whom there comes the wife Beauharnais, soon to be a widow: she that is Josephine Tascher Beauharnais; that shall be Josephine Empress Bonaparte, — for a black Divineress of the Tropics prophesied long since that she should be a Queen and more. Likewise, in the same hours, poor Adam Lux, nigh turned in the head, who, according to Forster, "has taken no food these three weeks," marches to the Guillotine for his Pamphlet on Charlotte Corday: he "sprang to the scaffold;" said "he died for her with great joy." Amid such fellow-travellers does Philippe arrive. For, be the month named Brumaire year 2 of Liberty, or November year 1793 of Slavery, the Guillotine goes always, *Guillotine va toujours*.

Enough, Philippe's indictment is soon drawn, his jury

soon convinced. He finds himself made guilty of Royalism, Conspiracy and much else; nay, it is a guilt in him that he voted Louis's Death, though he answers, "I voted in my soul and conscience." The doom he finds is death forthwith; this present sixth day of November is the last day that Phillippe is to see. Phillippe, says Montgaillard, thereupon called for breakfast: sufficiency of "oysters, two cutlets, best part of an excellent bottle of claret;" and consumed the same with apparent relish. A Revolutionary Judge, or some official Convention Emissary, then arrived, to signify that he might still do the State some service by revealing the truth about a plot or two. Phillippe answered that, on him, in the pass things had come to, the State had, he thought, small claim; that nevertheless, in the interest of Liberty, he, having still some leisure on his hands, was willing, were a reasonable question asked him, to give a reasonable answer. And so, says Montgaillard, he leant his elbow on the mantel-piece, and conversed in an undertone, with great seeming composure; till the leisure was done, or the Emissary went his ways.

At the door of the Conciergerie, Phillippe's attitude was erect and easy, almost commanding. It is five years, all but a few days, since Phillippe, within these same stone walls, stood up with an air of graciousness, and asked King Louis, "Whether it was a Royal Session, then, or a Bed of Justice?" O Heaven! — Three poor blackguards were to ride and die with him: some say, they objected to such company, and had to be flung in, neck and heels; but it seems not true. Objecting or not objecting, the gallows-vehicle gets under way. Phillippe's dress is remarked for its elegance; green frock, waistcoat of white *piqué*, yellow buckskins, boots clear as Warren: his air, as before, entirely composed, impassive, not to say easy and Brummelleian-polite. Through street after street; slowly, amid execrations; — past the Palais Égalité, whilom Palais Royal! ¹ The cruel Populace stopped him there, some minutes: Dame de Buffon, it is said, looked

¹ The Palais Royal, formerly the property of Orleans. had been confiscated by the republic.

out on him, in Jezebel head-tire;¹ along the ashlar Wall there ran these words in huge tricolor print, REPUBLIC ONE AND INDIVISIBLE; LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY OR DEATH: *National Property*. Philippe's eyes flashed hell-fire, one instant; but the next instant it was gone, and he sat impassive, Brummellean-polite. On the scaffold, Samson was for drawing off his boots: "Tush," said Philippe, "they will come off better *after*; let us have done, *dépêchons-nous!*"

So Philippe was not without virtue, then? God forbid that there should be any living man without it! He had the virtue to keep living for five-and-forty years; — other virtues perhaps more than we know of. But probably no mortal ever had such things recorded of him: such facts, and also such lies. For he was a *Jacobin Prince of the Blood*; consider what a combination! Also, unlike any Nero, any Borgia,² he lived in the Age of Pamphlets. Enough for us: Chaos *has* reabsorbed him; may it late or never bear his like again! — Brave young Orléans Égalité, deprived of all, only not deprived of himself, is gone to Coire in the Grisons, under the name of Corby, to teach Mathematics. The Égalité Family is at the darkest depths of the Nadir.

A far nobler Victim follows; one who will claim remembrance from several centuries: Jeanne-Marie Phlipon, the Wife of Roland.³ Queenly, sublime in her uncomplaining sorrow, seemed she to Riouffe in her Prison. "Something more than is usually found in the looks of women painted itself," says Riouffe, "in those large black eyes of hers, full of expression and sweetness. She spoke to me often, at the Grate: we were all attentive round her, in a sort of admiration and astonishment; she expressed herself

¹ Jezebel, the wife of Ahab, the idolatrous king of Israel, was noted for her wickedness and especially for inciting Ahab to the theft of Naboth's vineyard, I *Kings*, 21, 5-16.

² Nero, an early emperor of Rome, Pope Alexander VI of the Borgia family, and his son, Prince Cæsar Borgia, were noted for their vices and cruelty.

³ Madame Roland, the wife of a prominent Girondin, who by her talent and tact made her salon the centre of Girondin activities.

with a purity, with a harmony and prosody that made her language like music, of which the ear could never have enough. Her conversation was serious, not cold; coming from the mouth of a beautiful woman, it was frank and courageous as that of a great man." "And yet her maid said: 'Before you, she collects her strength; but in her own room, she will sit three hours sometimes leaning on the window, and weeping.'" She has been in Prison, liberated once, but recaptured the same hour, ever since the first of June: in agitation and uncertainty; which has gradually settled down into the last stern certainty, that of death. In the Abbaye Prison, she occupied Charlotte Corday's apartment. Here in the Conciergerie, she speaks with Riouffe, with Ex-Minister Clavière; calls the beheaded Twenty-two "*Nos amis*, our Friends," — whom we are soon to follow. During these five months, those *Memoirs* of hers were written, which all the world still reads.

But now, on the 8th of November, "clad in white," says Riouffe, "with her long black hair hanging down to her girdle," she is gone to the Judgement-bar. She returned with a quick step; lifted her finger, to signify to us that she was doomed: her eyes seemed to have been wet. Fouquier-Tinville's questions had been "brutal;" offended female honour flung them back on him, with scorn, not without tears. And now, short preparation soon done, she too shall go her last road. There went with her a certain Lamarche, "Director of Assignat-printing;" whose dejection she endeavoured to cheer. Arrived at the foot of the scaffold, she asked for pen and paper, "to write the strange thoughts that were rising in her:" a remarkable request; which was refused. Looking at the Statue of Liberty which stands there, she says bitterly: "O Liberty, what things are done in thy name!" For Lamarche's sake, she will die first; show him how easy it is to die: "Contrary to the order," said Samson. — "Pshaw, you cannot refuse the last request of a Lady;" and Samson yielded.

Noble white Vision, with its high queenly face, its soft proud eyes, long black hair flowing down to the girdle; and

as brave a heart as ever beat in woman's bosom! Like a white Grecian Statue, serenely complete, she shines in that black wreck of things; — long memorable. Honour to great Nature who, in Paris City, in the Era of Noble-Sentiment and Pompadourism, can make a Jeanne Phlipon, and nourish her to clear perennial Womanhood, though but on Logics, *Encyclopédies*, and the Gospel according to Jean-Jacques!¹ Biography will long remember that trait of asking for a pen "to write the strange thoughts that were rising in her." It is as a little light-beam, shedding softness, and a kind of sacredness, over all that preceded: so in her too there was an Unnameable; she too was a Daughter of the Infinite; there were mysteries which Philosophism had not dreamt of! — She left long written counsels to her little Girl; she said her Husband would not survive her.

Still crueller was the fate of poor Bailly, First National President, First Mayor of Paris: doomed now for Royalism, Fayettism; for that Red-Flag Business of the Champ-de-Mars; — one may say in general, for leaving his Astronomy to meddle with Revolution. It is the 10th of November 1793, a cold bitter drizzling rain, as poor Bailly is led through the streets; howling Populace covering him with curses, with mud; waving over his face a burning or smoking mockery of a Red Flag. Silent, unpitied, sits the innocent old man. Slow faring through the sleety drizzle, they have got to the Champ-de-Mars: Not there! vociferates the cursing Populace; such Blood ought not to stain an Altar of the Fatherland: not there; but on that dung-heap by the Riverside! So vociferates the cursing Populace; Officiality gives ear to them. The Guillotine is taken down, though with hands numbed by the sleety drizzle; is carried to the River-side; is there set up again, with slow numbness; pulse after pulse still counting itself out in the old man's weary heart. For hours long; amid curses and bitter frost-rain! "Bailly, thou tremblest," said one. "*Mon ami*, it is for cold," said Bailly, "*c'est de froid.*" Crueller end had no mortal.

Some days afterwards, Roland, hearing the news of what

¹ Jean Jacques Rousseau, the evangelist of Democracy. See p. 91.

happened on the 8th, embraces his kind Friends at Rouen, leaves their kind house which had given him refuge; goes forth, with farewell too sad for tears. On the morrow morning, 16th of the month, "some four leagues from Rouen, Paris-ward, near Bourg-Baudoin, in M. Normand's Avenue," there is seen sitting leant against a tree the figure of a rigorous wrinkled man; stiff now in the rigour of death; a canesword run through his heart; and at his feet this writing: "Whoever thou art that findest me lying, respect my remains: they are those of a man who consecrated all his life to being useful; and who has died as he lived, virtuous and honest." "Not fear, but indignation, made me quit my retreat, on learning that my Wife had been murdered. I wished not to remain longer on an earth polluted with crimes."

[The political and military success achieved by the Mountain through the Reign of Terror did not enable that party to maintain its unity. While the foreign and domestic enemies of the republic were being vanquished in the autumn of 1793, the republican leaders quarreled amongst themselves. Danton, who believed in Terror only as a means of unifying the nation against the hostile armies, retired from active affairs for a time but returned to assist Robespierre against the most violent and irreligious of the extremists, Hébert. In March, 1794, Hébert's influence with the Paris mob was undermined, and he was brought before the revolutionary tribunal, sentenced, and guillotined.

Robespierre at once turned against the followers of Danton, and prepared to strike them as well. He feared that his own position might be weakened by the clement attitude of Danton's friend, Desmoulins, who called for a cessation of the Reign of Terror, and he was personally jealous of Danton and his glory of having saved France in 1792.]

BOOK VI

THERMIDOR

CHAPTER II

DANTON, NO WEAKNESS

DANTON, meanwhile, has been pressingly sent for from Arcis: he must return instantly, cried Camille, cried Phélippeaux and Friends, who scented danger in the wind. Danger enough! A Danton, a Robespierre, chief-products of a victorious Revolution, are now arrived in immediate front of one another; must ascertain how they will live together, rule together. One conceives easily the deep mutual incompatibility that divided these two: with what terror of feminine hatred the poor seagreen Formula looked at the monstrous colossal Reality, and grew greener to behold him; — the Reality, again, struggling to think no ill of a chief-product of the Revolution; yet feeling at bottom that such chief-product was little other than a chief windbag, blown large by Popular air; not a man, with the heart of a man, but a poor spasmodic incorruptible pedant, with a logic-formula instead of heart; of Jesuit or Methodist-Parson nature; full of sincere-cant, incorruptibility, of virulence, poltroonery; barren as the east wind! Two such chief-products are too much for one Revolution.

Friends, trembling at the results of a quarrel on their part, brought them to meet. "It is right," said Danton, swallowing much indignation, "to repress the Royalists: but we should not strike except where it is useful to the Republic; we should not confound the innocent and the guilty." — "And who told you," replied Robespierre with a poisonous look, "that one innocent person had perished?" — "*Quoi*," said Danton, turning round to Friend Pâris self-named Fabricius, Juryman in the Revolutionary Tribunal: "*Quoi*,

not one innocent? What sayest thou of it, Fabricius?" — Friends, Westermann, this Pâris and others urged him to show himself, to ascend the Tribune and act. The man Danton was not prone to show himself; to act, or uproar for his own safety. A man of careless, large, hoping nature; a large nature that could rest: he would sit whole hours, they say, hearing Camille talk, and liked nothing so well. Friends urged him to fly; his Wife urged him: "Whither fly?" answered he: "If freed France cast me out, there are only dungeons for me elsewhere. One carries not his country with him at the sole of his shoe!" The man Danton sat still. Not even the arrestment of Friend Hérault, a member of *Salut*,¹ yet arrested by *Salut*, can rouse Danton. — On the night of the 30th of March Juryman Pâris came rushing in; haste looking through his eyes: A clerk of the *Salut* Committee had told him Danton's warrant was made out, he is to be arrested this very night! Entreaties there are and trepidation, of poor Wife, of Pâris and Friends: Danton sat silent for a while; then answered, "*Ils n'oseraient*, They dare not;" and would take no measures. Murmuring "They dare not," he goes to sleep as usual.

And yet, on the morrow morning, strange rumour spreads over Paris City: Danton, Camille, Phélippeaux, Lacroix have been arrested overnight! It is verily so: the corridors of the Luxembourg were all crowded, Prisoners crowding forth to see this giant of the Revolution enter among them. "Messieurs," said Danton politely, "I hoped soon to have got you all out of this: but here I am myself; and one sees not where it will end." — Rumour may spread over Paris: the Convention clusters itself into groups; wide-eyed, whispering, "Danton arrested!" Who then is safe? Legendre, mounting the Tribune, utters, at his own peril, a feeble word for him; moving that he be heard at that Bar before indictment; but Robespierre frowns him down: "Did you hear

¹ *Comité de Salut Publique*: the Committee of Public Safety, organized by Danton in the spring of 1793, which held the executive power and controlled the government; at this time it was dominated by the influence of Robespierre.

Chabot, or Bazire? Would you have two weights and measures?" Legendre cowers low: Danton, like the others, must take his doom.

Danton's Prison-thoughts were curious to have; but are not given in any quantity: indeed few such remarkable men have been left so obscure to us as this Titan of the Revolution. He was heard to ejaculate: "This time twelve-month, I was moving the creation of that same Revolutionary Tribunal. I crave pardon for it of God and man. They are all Brothers Cain; Brissot would have had me guillotined as Robespierre now will. I leave the whole business in a frightful welter (*gâchis épouvantable*): not one of them understands anything of government. Robespierre will follow me; I drag down Robespierre. O, it were better to be a poor fisherman than to meddle with governing of men." — Camille's young beautiful Wife, who had made him rich not in money alone, hovers round the Luxembourg, like a disembodied spirit, day and night. Camille's stolen letters to her still exist; stained with the mark of his tears. "I carry my head like a Saint-Sacrament?" so Saint-Just was heard to mutter: "perhaps he will carry his like a Saint-Dennis."¹

Unhappy Danton, thou still unhappier light Camille, once light *Procureur de la Lanterne*, ye also have arrived, then, at the Bourne of Creation, where, like Ulysses Polytlas at the limit and utmost Gades of his voyage, gazing into that dim Waste beyond Creation, a man does see *the Shade of his Mother*, pale, ineffectual; — and days when his Mother nursed and wrapped him are all too sternly contrasted with this day! Danton, Camille, Hérault, Westermann, and the others, very strangely massed up with Bazires, Swindler Chabots, Fabre d'Eglantines, Banker Freys, a most motley Batch, "*Fournée*" as such things will be called, stand ranked at the Bar of Tinville. It is the 2nd of April 1794. Danton has had but three days to lie in Prison; for the time presses.

¹ Saint Denis was the patron saint of France, who suffered martyrdom in 272 A.D. According to legend, he walked two miles after his decapitation, carrying his head in his hands.

What is your name? place of abode? and the like, Fouquier asks; according to formality. "My name is Danton," answers he; "a name tolerably known in the Revolution: my abode will soon be Annihilation (*dans le Néant*); but I shall live in the Pantheon of History." A man will endeavour to say something forcible, be it by nature or not! Héroult mentions epigrammatically that he "sat in this Hall, and was detested of Parlementeers." Camille makes answer, "My age is that of the *bon Sansculotte Jésus*; an age fatal to Revolutionists." O Camille, Camille! And yet in that Divine Transaction, let us say, there did lie, among other things, the fatallest Reproof ever uttered here below to Worldly Right-honourableness; "the highest fact," so devout Novalis calls it, "in the Rights of Man." Camille's real age, it would seem, is thirty-four. Danton is one year older.

Some five months ago, the Trial of the Twenty-two Girondins was the greatest that Fouquier had then done. But here is a still greater to do; a thing which tasks the whole faculty of Fouquier; which makes the very heart of him waver. For it is the voice of Danton that reverberates now from these domes; in passionate words, piercing with their wild sincerity, winged with wrath. Your best Witnesses he shivers into ruin at one stroke. He demands that the Committee-men themselves come as Witnesses, as Accusers; he "will cover them with ignominy." He raises his huge stature, he shakes his huge black head, fire flashes from the eyes of him, — piercing to all Republican hearts: so that the very Galleries, though we filled them by ticket, murmur sympathy; and are like to burst down, and raise the People, and deliver him! He complains loudly that he is classed with Chabots, with swindling Stockjobbers; that his Indictment is a list of platitudes and horrors. "Danton hidden on the 10th of August?" reverberates he, with the roar of a lion in the toils: "where are the men that had to press Danton to show himself, that day? Where are these high-gifted souls of whom he borrowed energy? Let them appear, these Accusers of mine: I have all the clearness of

my self-possession when I demand them. I will unmask the three shallow scoundrels," *les trois plats coquins*, Saint-Just, Couthon, Lebas, "who fawn on Robespierre, and lead him towards his destruction. Let them produce themselves here; I will plunge them into Nothingness, out of which they ought never to have risen." The agitated President agitates his bell; enjoins calmness, in a vehement manner: "What is it to thee how I defend myself?" cries the other: "the right of *dooming* me is thine always. The voice of a man speaking for his honour and his life may well drown the jingling of thy bell!" Thus Danton, higher and higher; till the lion-voice of him "dies away in his throat:" speech will not utter what is in that man. The Galleries murmur ominously; the first day's Session is over.

O Tinville, President Herman, what will ye do? They have two days more of it, by strictest Revolutionary Law. The Galleries already murmur. If this Danton were to burst your meshwork! — Very curious indeed to consider. It turns on a hair: and what a Hoitytoity were *there*, Justice and Culprit changing places; and the whole History of France running changed! For in France there is this Danton only that could still try to govern France. He only, the wild amorphous Titan; — and perhaps that other olive-complexioned individual, the Artillery-Officer at Toulon, whom we left pushing his fortune in the South? ¹

On the evening of the second day, matters looking not better but worse and worse, Fouquier and Herman, distraction in their aspect, rush over to *Salut Public*. What is to be done? *Salut Public* rapidly concocts a new Decree; whereby if men "insult Justice," they may be "thrown out of the Debates." For indeed, withal, is there not "a Plot in the Luxembourg Prison?" *Ci-devant* General Dillon, and others of the Suspect, plotting with Camille's Wife to distribute *assignats*; to force the Prisons, overset the Republic? Citizen Laflotte, himself Suspect but desiring enfranchise-

¹ Napoleon Bonaparte, then lieutenant of artillery, had won his first laurels the previous year by organizing the recapture of the naval port of Toulon.

ment, has reported said Plot for us: — a report that may bear fruit! Enough, on the morrow morning, an obedient Convention passes this Decree. *Salut* rushes off with it to the aid of Tinville, reduced now almost to extremities. And so, *Hors de Débats*, Out of the Debates, ye insolents! Policemen, do your duty! In such manner, with a dead-lift effort, *Salut*, Tinville, Herman, Leroi *Dix-Août*, and all stanch jurymen setting heart and shoulder to it, the Jury becomes “sufficiently instructed;” Sentence is passed, is sent by an Official, and torn and trampled on: *Death this day*. It is the 5th of April 1794. Camille’s poor Wife may cease hovering about this Prison. Nay, let her kiss her poor children; and prepare to enter it, and to follow! —

Danton carried a high look in the Death-cart. Not so Camille: it is but one week, and all is so topsyturvied; angel Wife left weeping; love, riches, Revolutionary fame, left all at the Prison-gate; carnivorous Rabble now howling round. Palpable, and yet incredible; like a madman’s dream! Camille struggles and writhes; his shoulders shuffle the loose coat off them, which hangs knotted, the hands tied: “Calm, my friend,” said Danton; “heed not that vile canaille (*laissez là cette vile canaille*).” At the foot of the Scaffold, Danton was heard to ejaculate: “O my Wife, my well-beloved, I shall never see thee more then!” — but, interrupting himself: “Danton, no weakness!” He said to Hérault-Séchelles stepping forward to embrace him: “Our heads will meet *there*,” in the Headsman’s sack. His last words were to Samson the Headsman himself: “Thou wilt show my head to the people; it is worth showing.”

So passes, like a gigantic mass, of valour, ostentation, fury, affection and wild revolutionary force and manhood, this Danton, to his unknown home. He was of Arcis-sur-Aube; born of “good farmer-people” there. He had many sins; but one worst sin he had not, that of Cant. No hollow Formalist, deceptive and self-deceptive, *ghastly* to the natural sense, was this; but a very Man: with all his dross he was a Man; fiery-real, from the great fire-bosom of Nature herself. He saved France from Brunswick; he walked

straight his own wild road, whither it led him. He may live for some generations in the memory of men.

CHAPTER IV

MUMBO—JUMBO

BUT on the day they call *Décadi*, New-Sabbath, 20 *Prairial*,¹ 8th June by old style, what thing is this going forward in the Jardin National, whilom Tuileries Garden?

All the world is there, in holyday clothes: foul linen went out with the Hébertists;² nay Robespierre, for one, would never once countenance that; but went always elegant and frizzled, not without vanity even, — and had his room hung round with seagreen Portraits and Busts. In holyday clothes, we say, are the innumerable Citoyens and Citoyennes: the weather is of the brightest; cheerful expectation lights all countenances. Juryman Vilate gives breakfast to many a Deputy, in his official Apartment, in the Pavillon *ci-devant* of Flora; rejoices in the bright-looking multitudes, in the brightness of leafy June, in the auspicious *Décadi*, or New-Sabbath. This day, it if please Heaven, we are to have, on improved Anti-Chaumette principles: a New Religion.

Catholicism being burned out, and Reason-worship³ guillotined, was there not need of one? Incorruptible Robes-

¹ A new calendar had been established by the revolutionaries who desired to break with all the traditions of the past. Weeks were to be of ten, instead of seven, days, and the tenth day, *Décadi*, one of rest. The months were called by names appropriate to their seasons: *Prairial*, the month of green fields; *Thermidor*, of heat, corresponding to June and July respectively; *Brumaire*, the month of mists; *Nivôse*, the snowy month, etc.

² Hébert was the leader of the extreme party, and flattered the most degenerate instincts of the mob. He and his followers affected coarse language and manners, as well as vile clothing. He was guillotined in March, 1794, because of the hatred and suspicion that he engendered in Robespierre.

³ The Worship of Reason was substituted for Christianity by the most extreme of the opponents of the Church, and an actress was crowned in Notre Dame as Goddess of Reason. The execution of Hébert and the atheist, Chaumette, put an end to the travesty.

pierre, not unlike the Ancients, as Legislator of a free people, will now also be Priest and Prophet. He has donned his sky-blue coat, made for the occasion; white silk waistcoat brodered with silver, black silk breeches, white stockings, shoe-buckles of gold. He is President of the Convention; he has made the Convention *decree*, so they name it, *décréter* the "Existence of the Supreme Being," and likewise "*ce principe consolateur* of the Immortality of the Soul." These consolatory principles, the basis of rational Republican Religion, are getting decreed; and here, on this blessed *Décadi*, by help of Heaven and Painter David, is to be our first act of worship.

See, accordingly, how after Decree passed, and what has been called "the scraggiest Prophetic Discourse ever uttered by man," — Mahomet Robespierre, in sky-blue coat and black breeches, frizzled and powdered to perfection, bearing in his hand a bouquet of flowers and wheat-ears, issues proudly from the Convention Hall; Convention following him, yet, as is remarked, with an interval. Amphitheatre has been raised, or at least *Monticule* or Elevation; hideous Statues of Atheism, Anarchy and such like, thanks to Heaven and Painter David, strike abhorrence into the heart. Unluckily, however, our Monticule is too small. On the top of it not half of us can stand; wherefore there arises indecent shoving, nay treasonous irreverent growling. Peace, thou Bourdon de l'Oise; peace, or it may be worse for thee!

The seagreen Pontiff takes a torch, Painter David handing it; mouths some other froth-rant of vocables, which happily one cannot hear; strides resolutely forward, in sight of expectant France; sets his torch to Atheism and Company, which are but made of pasteboard steeped in turpentine. They burn up rapidly; and, from within, there rises "by machinery," an incombustible Statue of Wisdom, which, by ill hap, gets besmoked a little; but does stand there visible in as serene attitude as it can.

And then? Why, then, there is other Processioning,

scraggy Discoursing, and — this *is* our Feast of the *Être Suprême*; our new Religion, better or worse, is come! — Look at it one moment, O Reader, not two. The shabbiest page of Human Annals: or is there, that thou wottest of, one shabbier? Mumbo-Jumbo of the African woods to me seems venerable beside this new Deity of Robespierre; for this is a *conscious* Mumbo-Jumbo, and *knows* that he is machinery. O seagreen Prophet, unhappiest of windbags blown high to bursting, what distracted Chimera among realities art thou growing to! This then, this common pitch-link for artificial fireworks of turpentine and pasteboard; *this* is the miraculous Aaron's Rod thou wilt stretch over a hag-ridden hell-ridden France, and bid her plagues cease? Vanish, thou and it! — “*Avec ton Être Suprême*,” said Billaud, “*tu commences m’embêter*: With thy *Être Suprême* thou beginnest to be a bore to me.”

Catherine Théot, on the other hand, “an ancient serving-maid seventy-nine years of age,” inured to Prophecy and the Bastille from of old, sits in an upper room in the Rue de Contrescarpe, poring over the Book of Revelations, with an eye to Robespierre; finds that this astonishing thrice-potent Maximilien really is the Man spoken of by Prophets, who is to make the Earth young again. With her sit devout old Marchionesses, *ci-devant* honourable women; among whom Old-Constituent Dom Gerle, with his addle head, cannot be wanting. They sit there, in the Rue de Contrescarpe; in mysterious adoration: Mumbo is Mumbo, and Robespierre is his Prophet. A conspicuous man this Robespierre. He has his volunteer Bodyguard of *Tappe-durs*, let us say *Strike-sharps*, fierce Patriots with feruled sticks; and Jacobins kissing the hem of his garment. He enjoys the admiration of many, the worship of some; and is well worth the wonder of one and all. . . .

[The dictatorship of Robespierre, which resulted from the elimination of Hébert and Danton, was short-lived. The increase in the fury of the Reign of Terror, which was laid to his charge, alienated the moderates; no one felt safe; the defeat of the foreign enemies of France made the Terror appear useless cruelty. There still remained in the Convention

and in the Committee of Public Safety many followers of Danton and Hébert, who believed that with Robespierre in power their own doom was certain. From the combination of these men with the cautious moderates, there resulted a conspiracy for the overthrow of the dictator. On the 9th Thermidor (July 27, 1794), Robespierre was attacked in the Convention and together with his brother and his friends, St. Just and Couthon, was outlawed.

The city of Paris and the Jacobin Club still supported Robespierre and, had he been willing to call upon the mob, might have fought for him against the authority of the Convention. But Robespierre hesitated to encourage the armed municipal force under Henriot to open rebellion. At the moment when the troops of the Convention, under Barras, proceeded to arrest Robespierre, Paris found herself without a leader.]

VOLUME III — BOOK VI

CHAPTER VII

GO DOWN TO

... Our fifth-act, of this natural Greek Drama, with its natural unities, can only be painted in gross; somewhat as that antique Painter, driven desperate, did the *foam*. For through this blessed July night, there is clangour, confusion very great, of marching troops; of Sections going this way, Sections going that; of Missionary Representatives reading Proclamations by torchlight; Missionary Legendre, who has raised force somewhere, emptying out the Jacobins, and flinging their key on the Convention table: "I have locked their door; it shall be Virtue that reopens it." Paris, we say, is set against itself, rushing confused, as Ocean-currents do; a huge Mahlstrom, sounding there, under cloud of night. Convention sits permanent on this hand; Municipality most permanent on that. The poor prisoners hear tocsin and rumour; strive to bethink them of the signals apparently of hope. Meek continual Twilight streaming up, which will be Dawn and a To-morrow, silvers the Northern hem of Night; it wends and wends there, that meek brightness, like a silent prophecy, along the great ring-dial of the Heaven. So still, eternal! and on Earth all is confused shadow and conflict; dissidence, tumultuous gloom and glare; and "Destiny as yet sits wavering, and shakes her doubtful urn."

About three in the morning, the dissident Armed Forces have *met*. Henriot's Armed Force stood ranked in the Place de Grève; and now Barras's, which he has recruited, arrives there; and they front each other, cannon bristling against cannon. Citoyens! cries the voice of Discretion loudly enough, Before coming to bloodshed, to endless civil-war,

hear the Convention Decree read: "Robespierre and all rebels Out of Law!" — Out of Law? There is terror in the sound. Unarmed Citoyens disperse rapidly home. Municipal Cannoneers, in sudden whirl, anxiously unanimous, range themselves on the Convention side, with shouting. At which shout, Henriot descends from his upper room, far gone in drink as some say: finds his Place de Grève empty; the cannon's mouth turned *towards* him; and on the whole, — that it is now the catastrophe!

Stumbling in again, the wretched drunk-sobered Henriot announces: "All is lost!" "*Misérable*, it is thou that hast lost it!" cry they; and fling him, or else he flings himself, out of window: far enough down; into masonwork and horror of cesspool; not into death but worse. Augustin Robespierre follows him; with the like fate. Saint-Just, they say, called on Lebas to kill him; who would not. Couthon crept under a table; attempting to kill himself; not doing it. — On entering that Sanhedrim of Insurrection, we find all as good as extinct; undone, ready for seizure. Robespierre was sitting on a chair, with pistol-shot blown through not his head but his under-jaw; the suicidal hand had failed. With prompt zeal, not without trouble, we gather these wrecked Conspirators; fish up even Henriot and Augustin, bleeding and foul; pack them all, rudely enough, into carts; and shall, before sunrise, have them safe under lock and key. Amid shoutings and embracings.

Robespierre lay in an anteroom of the Convention Hall, while his Prison-escort was getting ready; the mangled jaw bound up rudely with bloody linen: a spectacle to men. He lies stretched on a table, a deal-box his pillow; the sheath of the pistol is still clenched convulsively in his hand. Men bully him, insult him: his eyes still indicate intelligence; he speaks no word. "He had on the sky-blue coat he had got made for the Feast of the *Être Suprême*" — O Reader, can thy hard heart hold out against that? His trousers were nankeen; the stockings had fallen down over the ankles. He spake no word more in this world.

And so, at six in the morning, a victorious Convention ad-

journals. Report flies over Paris as on golden wings; penetrates the Prisons; irradiates the faces of those that were ready to perish: turnkeys and *moutons*, fallen from their high estate, look mute and blue. It is the 28th day of July, called roth of Thermidor, year 1794.

Fouquier had but to identify; his Prisoners being already Out of Law. At four in the afternoon, never before were the streets of Paris seen so crowded. From the Palais de Justice to the Place de la Révolution, for *thither* again go the Tumbrils this time, it is one dense stirring mass; all windows crammed; the very roofs and ridge-tiles budding forth human Curiosity, in strange gladness. The Death-tumbrils, with their motley Batch of Outlaws, some Twenty-three or so, from Maximilien to Mayor Fleuriot and Simon the Cordwainer, roll on. All eyes are on Robespierre's Tumbril, where he, his jaw bound in dirty linen, with his half-dead Brother, and half-dead Henriot, lie shattered; their "seventeen hours" of agony about to end. The Gendarmes point their swords at him, to show the people which is he. A woman springs on the Tumbril; clutching the side of it with one hand; waving the other Sibyl-like; and exclaims: "The death of thee gladdens my very heart, *m'enivre de joie*;" Robespierre opened his eyes; "*Scélérat*, go down to Hell, with the curses of all wives and mothers!" — At the foot of the scaffold, they stretched him on the ground till his turn came. Lifted aloft, his eyes again opened; caught the bloody axe. Samson wrenched the coat off him; wrenched the dirty linen from his jaw: the jaw fell powerless, there burst from him a cry; — hideous to hear and see. Samson, thou canst not be too quick!

Samson's work done, there bursts forth shout on shout of applause. Shout, which prolongs itself not only over Paris, but over France, but over Europe, and down to this generation. Deservedly, and also undeservedly. O unhappiest Advocate of Arras, wert thou worse than other Advocates? Stricter man, according to his Formula, to his Credo and his Cant, of probities, benevolences, pleasures-of-virtue, and such like, lived not in that age. A man fitted, in some

luckier settled age, to have become one of those incorruptible barren Pattern-Figures, and have had marble-tablets and funeral-sermons. His poor landlord, the Cabinet-maker in the Rue Saint-Honoré, loved him; his Brother died for him. May God be merciful to him, and to us!

This is the end of the Reign of Terror; new glorious *Revolution* named of *Thermidor*; of Thermidor 9th, year 2; which being interpreted into old slave-style means 27th of July 1794. Terror is ended; and death in the Place de la Révolution, were the "*Tail* of Robespierre" once executed; which service Fouquier in large Batches is swiftly managing.

FINIS

HOMER'S Epos, it is remarked, is like a Bas-Relief sculpture: it does not conclude, but merely ceases. Such, indeed, is the Epos of Universal History itself. Directorates, Consulates, Emperorships, Restorations, Citizen-Kingships succeed this Business in due series, in due genesis one out of the other. Nevertheless the First-parent of all these may be said to have gone to air in the way we see. A Babœuf Insurrection, next year, will die in the birth; stifled by the Soldiery. A Senate, if tinged with Royalism, can be purged by the Soldiery; and an Eighteenth of Fructidor transacted by the mere show of bayonets. Nay Soldiers' bayonets can be used *à posteriori* on a Senate, and make it leap out of window, — still bloodless; and produce an Eighteenth of Brumaire. Such changes must happen: but they are managed by intrigings, caballings, and then by orderly word of command; almost like mere changes of Ministry. Not in general by sacred right of Insurrection, but by milder methods growing ever milder, shall the events of French History be henceforth brought to pass.

It is admitted that this Directorate, which owned, at its starting, these three things, an "old table, a sheet of paper, and an inkbottle," and no visible money or arrangement whatever, did wonders: that France, since the Reign of

Terror hushed itself, has been a new France, awakened like a giant out of torpor; and has gone on, in the Internal Life of it, with continual progress. As for the External form and forms of Life, what can we say, except that out of the Eater there comes Strength; out of the Unwise there comes *not* Wisdom! — Shams are burnt up; nay, what as yet is the peculiarity of France, the very Cant of them is burnt up. The new Realities are not yet come: ah no, only Phantasms, Paper models, tentative Prefigurements of such! In France there are now Four Million Landed Properties; that black portent of an Agrarian Law is, as it were, *realized*. What is still stranger, we understand all Frenchmen have “the right of duel;” the Hackney-coachman with the Peer, if insult be given: such is the law of Public Opinion. Equality at least in death! The Form of Government is by Citizen King, frequently shot at, not yet shot.

On the whole, therefore, has it not been fulfilled what was prophesied, *ex-post facto* indeed, by the Arch-quack Cagliostro, or another? He, as he looked in rapt vision and amazement into these things, thus spake: “Ha! What is *this*? Angels, Uriel, Anachiel, and ye other Five; Pentagon of Rejuvenescence; Power that destroyedst Original Sin; Earth, Heaven, and thou Outer Limbo, which men name Hell! Does the EMPIRE OF IMPOSTURE waver! Burst there, in starry sheen up-darting, Light-rays from out of *its* dark foundations; as it rocks and heaves, not in travail-throes but in death-throes? Yea, Light-rays, piercing, clear, that salute the Heavens, — lo, they *kindle* it; their starry clearness becomes as red Hellfire!

“IMPOSTURE is in flames, Imposture is burnt up: one red sea of Fire, wild-bellowing, enwraps the World; with its fire-tongue licks at the very Stars. Thrones are hurled into it, and Dubois Mitres, and Prebendal Stalls that drop fatness, and — ha! what see I? — all the *Gigs* of Creation: all, all! Woe is me! Never since Pharaoh’s Chariots, in the Red Sea of water, was there wreck of Wheel-vehicles like this in the Sea of Fire. Desolate, as ashes, as gases, shall they wander in the wind.

“Higher, higher yet flames the Fire-Sea; crackling with new dislocated timber; hissing with leather and prunella. The metal Images are molten; the marble Images become mortar-lime; the stone Mountains sulkily explode. RESPECTABILITY, with all her collected Gigs inflamed for funeral pyre, wailing, leaves the Earth: not to return save under new Avatar. Imposture how it burns, through generations: how it is burnt up; for a time. The World is black ashes; — which, ah, when will they grow green? The Images all run into amorphous Corinthian brass; all Dwellings of men destroyed; the very mountains peeled and riven, the valleys black and dead: it is an empty World! Woe to them that shall be born then! — A King, a Queen (ah me!) were hurled in; did rustle once; flew aloft, crackling, like paper-scroll. Iscariot Égalité was hurled in; thou grim de Launay, with thy grim Bastille; whole kindreds and peoples; five millions of mutually destroying Men. For it is the End of the dominion of IMPOSTURE (which is Darkness and opaque Firedamp); and the burning up, with unquenchable fire, of all the Gigs that are in the Earth.” This Prophecy, we say, has it not been fulfilled, is it not fulfilling?

And so here, O Reader, has the time come for us two to part. Toilsome was our journeying together; not without offence; but it is done. To me thou wert as a beloved shade, the disembodied or not yet embodied spirit of a Brother. To thee I was but as a Voice. Yet was our relation a kind of sacred one; doubt not that! For whatsoever once sacred things become hollow jargons, yet while the Voice of Man speaks with Man, hast thou not there the living fountain out of which all sacrednesses sprang, and will yet spring? Man, by the nature of him, is definable as “an incarnated Word.” Ill stands it with me if I have spoken falsely: thine also it was to hear truly. Farewell

PAST AND PRESENT

BOOK I

PROEM

CHAPTER I

MIDAS

THE condition of England, on which many pamphlets are now in the course of publication, and many thoughts unpublished are going on in every reflective head, is justly regarded as one of the most ominous, and withal one of the strangest, ever seen in this world. England is full of wealth, or multifarious produce, supply for human want in every kind; yet England is dying of inanition. With unabated bounty the land of England blooms and grows; waving with yellow harvests; thick-studded with workshops, industrial implements, with fifteen millions of workers, understood to be the strongest, the cunningest and the willingest our Earth ever had; these men are here; the work they have done, the fruit they have realized is here, abundant, exuberant on every hand of us: and behold, some baleful fiat as of Enchantment has gone forth, saying, "Touch it not, ye workers, ye master-workers, ye master-idlers; none of you can touch it, no man of you shall be the better for it; this is enchanted fruit!" On the poor workers such fiat falls first, in its rudest shape; but on the rich master-workers too it falls; neither can the rich master-idlers, nor any richest or highest man escape, but all are like to be brought low with it, and made "poor" enough, in the money sense or a far fataller one.

Of these successful skilful workers some two millions, it is now counted, sit in Workhouses, Poor-law Prisons; or

have "out-door-relief" flung over the wall to them, — the workhouse Bastille¹ being filled to bursting, and the strong Poor-law broken asunder by a stronger. They sit there, these many months now; their hope of deliverance as yet small. In workhouses, pleasantly so-named, because work cannot be done in them. Twelve hundred thousand workers in England alone; their cunning right-hand lamed, lying idle in their sorrowful bosom; their hopes, outlooks, share of this fair world, shut in by narrow walls. They sit there, pent up, as in a kind of horrid enchantment; glad to be imprisoned and enchanted, that they may not perish starved. The picturesque Tourist, in a sunny autumn day, through this bounteous realm of England, descries the Union Workhouse on his path. "Passing by the Workhouse of St. Ives in Huntingdonshire, on a bright day last autumn," says the picturesque Tourist, "I saw sitting on wooden benches, in front of their Bastille and within their ring-wall and its railings, some half-hundred or more of these men. Tall robust figures, young mostly or of middle age; of honest countenance, many of them thoughtful and even intelligent-looking men. They sat there, near by one another; but in a kind of torpor, especially in a silence, which was very striking. In silence: for, alas, what word was to be said? An Earth all lying round, crying, Come and till me, come and reap me; — yet we here sit enchanted! In the eyes and brows of the men hung the gloomiest expression, not of anger, but of grief and shame and manifold inarticulate distress and weariness; they returned my glance with a glance that seemed to say, 'Do not look at us. We sit enchanted here, we know not why. The Sun shines and the Earth calls; and, by the governing Powers and Impotences of this England, we are forbidden to obey. It is impossible, they tell us!' There was something that reminded me of Dante's Hell in the look of all this; and I rode swiftly away."

So many hundred thousands sit in workhouses; and other hundred thousands have not yet got even workhouses;

¹ The use of the word Bastille as a synonym for prison is frequent in 19th century literature.

and in thrifty Scotland itself, in Glasgow or Edinburgh City, in their dark lanes, hidden from all but the eye of God, and of rare Benevolence the minister of God, there are scenes of woe and destitution and desolation, such as, one may hope, the Sun never saw before in the most barbarous regions where men dwelt. . . .

At Stockport Assizes — and this too has no reference to the present state of trade, being of date prior to that — a Mother and a Father are arraigned and found guilty of poisoning three of their children, to defraud a “burial-society” of some £3 8s. due on the death of each child: they are arraigned, found guilty; and the official authorities, it is whispered, hint that perhaps the case is not solitary, that perhaps you had better not probe farther into that department of things. This is in the autumn of 1841; the crime itself is of the previous year or season. “Brutal savages, degraded Irish,” mutters the idle reader of Newspapers; hardly lingering on this incident. Yet it is an incident worth lingering on; the depravity, savagery and degraded Irishism being never so well admitted. In the British land, a human Mother and Father, of white skin and professing the Christian religion, had done this thing; they, with their Irishism and necessity and savagery, had been driven to do it. Such instances are like the highest mountain apex emerged into view; under which lies a whole mountain region and land, not yet emerged. A human Mother and Father had said to themselves, What shall we do to escape starvation? We are deep sunk here, in our dark cellar; and help is far. — Yes, in the Ugolino Hunger-tower¹ stern things happen; best-loved little Gaddo fallen dead on his Father’s knees! — The Stockport Mother and Father think and hint: Our poor little starveling Tom, who cries all day for victuals, who will see only evil and not good in this world: if he were

¹ Count Ugolino della Gherardesca, Podestà of Pisa, was defeated in a civil strife by Archbishop Ruggiero Rubaldino, and with his two sons, Uguccio and Gaddo, starved to death in the Hunger Tower of Pisa. His story is told with tremendous power in Dante’s *Inferno*, Canto xxxiii.

out of misery at once; he well dead, and the rest of us perhaps kept alive? It is thought, and hinted; at last it is done. And now Tom being killed, and all spent and eaten, Is it poor little starveling Jack that must go, or poor little starveling Will? — What a committee of ways and means!

In starved sieged cities, in the uttermost doomed ruin of old Jerusalem fallen under the wrath of God, it was prophesied and said, "The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children."¹ The stern Hebrew imagination could conceive no blacker gulf of wretchedness; that was the ultimatum of degraded god-punished man. And we here, in modern England, exuberant with supply of all kinds, besieged by nothing if it be not by invisible Enchantments, are we reaching that? — How come these things? Wherefore are they, wherefore should they be?

Nor are they of the St. Ives workhouses, of the Glasgow lanes, and Stockport cellars, the only unblessed among us. This successful industry of England, with its plethoric wealth, has as yet made nobody rich; it is an enchanted wealth, and belongs yet to nobody. We might ask, Which of us has it enriched? We can spend thousands where we once spent hundreds; but can purchase nothing good with them. In Poor and Rich, instead of noble thrift and plenty, there is idle luxury alternating with mean scarcity and inability. We have sumptuous garnitures for our Life, but have forgotten to *live* in the middle of them. It is an enchanted wealth; no man of us can yet touch it. The class of men who feel that they are truly better off by means of it, let them give us their name!

Many men eat finer cookery, drink dearer liquors, — with what advantage they can report, and their Doctors can: but in the heart of them, if we go out of the dyspeptic stomach, what increase of blessedness is there? Are they better, beautifuller, stronger, braver? Are they even what they call "happier?"² Do they look with satisfaction on more

¹ *Lamentations of Jeremiah*, iv, 10.

² Cf. *The Everlasting Yea*, pp. 36, 37.

things and human faces in this God's-Earth; do more things and human faces look with satisfaction on them? Not so. Human faces gloom discordantly, disloyally on one another. Things, if it be not mere cotton and iron things, are growing disobedient to man. The Master Worker is enchanted, for the present, like his Workhouse Workman; clamours, in vain hitherto, for a very simple sort of "Liberty:" the liberty "to buy where he finds it cheapest, to sell where he finds it dearest." With guineas jingling in every pocket, he was no whit richer; but now, the very guineas threatening to vanish, he feels that he is poor indeed. Poor Master Worker! And the Master Unworker, is not he in a still fataller situation? Pausing amid his game-preserves, with awful eye, — as he well may! Coercing fifty-pound tenants;¹ coercing, bribing, cajoling; doing what he likes with his own. His mouth full of loud futilities, and arguments to prove the excellence of his Corn-law;² and in his heart the blackest misgiving, a desperate half-consciousness that his excellent Corn-law is *indefensible*, that his loud arguments for it are of a kind to strike men too literally *dumb*.

To whom, then, is this wealth of England wealth? Who is it that it blesses; makes happier, wiser, beautifuller, in any way better? Who has got hold of it, to make it fetch and carry for him, like a true servant, not like a false mock-servant; to do him any real service whatsoever? As yet no one. We have more riches than any Nation ever had before; we have less good of them than any Nation ever had before. Our successful industry is hitherto unsuccessful; a strange success, if we stop here! In the midst of plethoric plenty, the people perish; with gold walls, and full barns, no man feels himself safe or satisfied. Workers, Master Workers, Unworkers, all men, come to a pause; stand fixed,

¹ The Reform Act of 1832 granted to tenants of property rented at fifty pounds a year the right to vote for county representatives in the House of Commons. The tenants were generally farmers and under the control of their aristocratic landlords.

² The Corn Laws were taxes on grain and were unpopular among the manufacturing classes because they raised the price of foodstuffs. For the same reason they were favored by the agricultural classes.

and cannot farther. Fatal paralysis spreading inwards, from the extremities, in St. Ives workhouses, in Stockport cellars, through all limbs, as if towards the heart itself. Have we actually got enchanted, then; accursed by some god? —

Midas longed for gold, and insulted the Olympians.¹ He got gold, so that whatsoever he touched became gold — and he, with his long ears, was little the better for it. Midas had misjudged the celestial music-tones; Midas had insulted Apollo and the gods: the gods gave him his wish, and a pair of long ears, which also were a good appendage to it. What a truth in these old Fables!

CHAPTER III

THE MANCHESTER INSURRECTION²

. . . And truly this first practical form of the Sphinx-question,³ inarticulately and so audibly put there, is one of the most impressive ever asked in the world. “Behold us here, so many thousands, millions, and increasing at the rate of fifty every hour. We are right willing and able to work; and on the Planet Earth is plenty of work and wages for a million times as many. We ask, If you mean to lead us towards work; to try to lead us — by ways new, never yet heard of till this new unheard-of Time? Or if you declare that you cannot lead us? And expect that we are to remain quietly

¹ In Greek legend, the gods granted to Midas, King of Phrygia, his request that whatever he touched might turn to gold. Another legend relates that because Midas refused to award the prize of a musical contest between Pan and Apollo to the latter, the gods changed his ears into those of an ass.

² The misery of the people led in 1819 to a movement designed to transfer power from the landowners to the people by the reform of Parliament. A vast meeting of 50,000 persons at Manchester came into contact with the soldiery and were dispersed with bloodshed.

³ In Greek legend, the Sphinx was a female monster who sat by the roadside and propounded riddles to those who passed by. Those who could not answer her riddles were strangled. Carlyle’s “Sphinx-question” is a difficult question which must be answered if society is to continue.

unled, and in a composed manner perish of starvation? What is it you expect of us? What is it you mean to do with us?" This question, I say, has been put in the hearing of all Britain; and will be again put, and ever again, till some answer be given it.

Unhappy Workers, unhappier Idlers, unhappy men and women of this actual England. We are yet very far from an answer, and there will be no existence for us without finding one. "A fair day's-wages for a fair day's-work:" it is as just a demand as Governed men ever made of Governing. It is the everlasting right of man. Indisputable as Gospels, as arithmetical multiplication-tables: it must and will have itself fulfilled; — and yet, in these times of ours, with what enormous difficulty, next-door to impossibility! For the times are really strange; of a complexity intricate with all the new width of the ever-widening world; times here of half-frantic velocity of impetus, there of the deadeast-looking stillness and paralysis; times definable as showing two qualities, Dilettantism and Mammonism; — most intricate obstructed times! Nay, if there were not a Heaven's radiance of Justice, prophetic, clearly of Heaven, discernible behind all these confused world-wide entanglements, of Landlord interests, Manufacturing interests, Tory-Whig interests, and who knows what other interests, expedencies, vested interests, established possessions, inveterate Dilettantisms, Midas-eared Mammonisms, — it would seem to every one a flat impossibility, which all wise men might as well at once abandon. If you do not know eternal Justice from momentary Expediency, and understand in your heart of hearts how Justice, radiant, beneficent, as the all-victorious Light-element, is also in essence, if need be, an all-victorious *Fire*-element, and melts all manner of vested interests, and the hardest iron cannon, as if they were soft wax, and does ever in the long-run rule and reign, and allows nothing else to rule and reign — you also would talk of impossibility! But it is only difficult, it is not impossible. Possible? It is, with whatever difficulty, very clearly inevitable.

Fair day's-wages for fair day's-work! exclaims a sarcastic man: Alas, in what corner of this Planet, since Adam first awoke on it, was that ever realized? The day's-wages of John Milton's day's-work, named *Paradise Lost* and *Milton's Works*, were Ten Pounds paid by instalments, and a rather close escape from death on the gallows. Consider that: it is no rhetorical flourish; it is an authentic, altogether quiet fact, — emblematic, quietly documentary of a whole world of such, ever since human history began. Oliver Cromwell quitted his farming; undertook a Hercules' Labour and lifelong wrestle with that Lernean Hydra-coil,¹ wide as England, hissing heaven-high through its thousand-crowned, coroneted, shovel-hatted² quack-heads; and he did wrestle with it, the truest and terriblest wrestle I have heard of; and he wrestled it, and mowed and cut it down a good many stages, as that its hissing is ever since pitiful in comparison, and one can walk abroad in comparative peace from it: — and his wages, as I understand, were burial under the gallows-tree near Tyburn Turnpike, with his head on the gable of Westminster Hall, and two centuries now of mixed cursing and ridicule from all manner of men. His dust lies under the Edgware Road, near Tyburn Turnpike, at this hour; and his memory is — Nay, what matters what his memory is? His memory, at bottom, is or yet shall be as that of a god: a terror and horror to all quacks and cowards and insincere persons; an everlasting encouragement, new memento, battleword, and pledge of victory to all the brave. It is the natural course and history of the Godlike, in every place, in every time. What god ever carried it with the Tenpound Franchisers,³ in Open Vestry, or with any Sanhedrim⁴ of considerable standing? When was a

¹ The second of the twelve labors of Hercules was the slaying of the many-headed Lernean hydra, whose chief characteristic was its ability to grow two new heads in the place of each head which was cut off.

² Shovel-hat. Carlyle's favorite appellation for the clergy.

³ The Reform Act of 1832 granted the franchise, or right to vote, to occupiers of tenements located in boroughs and valued at ten pounds a year.

⁴ Sanhedrim. See note 1, p. 105.

god found "agreeable" to everybody? The regular way is to hang, kill, crucify your gods, and execrate and trample them under your stupid hoofs for a century or two; till you discover that they are gods, — and then take to braying over them, still in a very long-eared manner! — So speaks the sarcastic man; in his wild way, very mournful truths.

Day's-wages for day's-work? continues he: The Progress of Human Society consists even in this same, The better and better apportioning of wages to work. Give me this, you have given me all. Pay to every man accurately what he has worked for, what he has earned and done and deserved, — to this man broad lands and honours, to that man high gibbets and treadmills: what more have I to ask? Heaven's Kingdom, which we daily pray for, *has* come; God's will is done on Earth even as it is in Heaven! This *is* the radiance of celestial Justice; in the light or in the fire of which all impediments, vested interests, and iron cannon, are more and more melting like wax, and disappearing from the pathways of men. A thing ever struggling forward; irrepressible, advancing inevitably; perfecting itself, all days, more and more, — never to be *perfect* till that general Doomsday, the ultimate Consummation, and Last of earthly Days.

True, as to "perfection" and so forth, answer we; true enough! And yet withal we have to remark, that imperfect Human Society holds itself together, and finds place under the Sun, in virtue simply of some *approximation* to perfection being actually made and put into practice. We remark farther, that there are supportable approximations, and then likewise insupportable. With some, almost with any, supportable approximation men are apt, perhaps too apt, to rest indolently patient, and say, It will do. Thus these poor Manchester manual workers mean only, by day's-wages for day's-work, certain coins of money adequate to keep them living; — in return for their work, such modicum of food, clothes and fuel as will enable them to continue their work itself! They as yet clamour for no more; the rest, still inarticulate, cannot yet shape itself into a demand at all, and

only lies in them as a dumb wish; perhaps only, still more inarticulate, as a dumb, altogether unconscious want. *This* is the supportable approximation they would rest patient with, That by their work they might be kept alive to work more! — *This* once grown unattainable, I think your approximation may consider itself to have reached the *insupportable* stage; and may prepare, with whatever difficulty, reluctance and astonishment, for one of two things, for changing or perishing! With the millions no longer able to live, how can the units keep living? It is too clear the Nation itself is on the way to suicidal death. . . .

CHAPTER IV

MORRISON'S PILL ¹

WHAT is to be done, what would you have us do? asks many a one, with a tone of impatience, almost of reproach; and then, if you mention some one thing, some two things, twenty things that might be done, turns round with a satirical tehee, and "These are your remedies!" The state of mind indicated by such question, and such rejoinder, is worth reflecting on.

It seems to be taken for granted, by these interrogative philosophers, that there is some "thing," or handful of "things," which could be done; some Act of Parliament, "remedial measure" or the like, which could be passed, whereby the social malady were fairly fronted, conquered, put an end to; so that, with your remedial measure in your pocket, you could then go on triumphant, and be troubled no farther. "You tell us the evil," cry such persons, as if justly aggrieved, "and do not tell us how it is to be cured!"

How it is to be cured? Brothers, I am sorry I have got no Morrison's Pill for curing the maladies of Society. It were infinitely handier if we had a Morrison's Pill, Act of

¹ James Morison (*not* Morrison) (1770-1840), self-styled "the Hygeist," made an enormous fortune by the sale of "Morison's Pills, universal vegetable medicines." These pills were the subject of a popular song (printed in *Notes and Queries*, 3d ser., x. 477-478) which appeared in 1840.

Parliament, or remedial measure, which men could swallow, one good time, and then go on in their old courses, cleared from all miseries and mischiefs! Unluckily we have none such; unluckily the Heavens themselves, in their rich pharmacopoeia, contain none such. There will no "thing" be done that will cure you. There will a radical universal alteration of your regimen and way of life take place; there will a most agonizing divorce between you and your chimeras, luxuries and falsities, take place; a most toilsome, all-but "impossible" return to Nature, and her veracities and her integrities, take place: that so the inner fountains of life may again begin, like eternal Light-fountains, to irradiate and purify your bloated, swollen, foul existence, drawing nigh, as at present, to nameless death! Either death or else all this will take place. Judge if, with such diagnosis, any Morrison's Pill is like to be discoverable!

But the Life-fountain within you once again set flowing, what innumerable "things," whole sets and classes and continents of "things," year after year, and decade after decade, and century after century, will then be doable and done! Not Emigration, Education, Corn-Law Abrogation, Sanitary Regulation, Land Property-Tax; not these alone, nor a thousand times as much as these. Good Heavens, there will then be light in the inner heart of here and there a man, to discern what is just, what is commanded by the Most High God, what *must* be done, were it never so "impossible." Vain jargon in favour of the palpably unjust will then abridge itself within limits. Vain jargon, on Hustings,¹ in Parliaments or wherever else, when here and there a man has vision for the essential God's-Truth of the things jargoned of, will become very vain indeed. The silence of here and there such a man, how eloquent in answer to such jargon! Such jargon, frightened at its own gaunt echo, will unspeakably abate; nay, for a while, may almost in a manner

¹ Hustings. The platform on which — previous to 1872 — the nomination of candidates for Parliament was made, and from which the candidates addressed the electors; hence, in general, the proceedings at a parliamentary election.

disappear, — the wise answering it in silence, and even the simple taking cue from them to hoot it down wherever heard. It will be a blessed time; and many “things” will become doable, — and when the brains are out, an absurdity will die! Not easily again shall a Corn-Law argue ten years for itself; and shall talk and argue, when impartial persons have to say with a sigh that, for so long back, they have heard no “argument” advanced for it but such as might make the angels and almost the very jackasses weep! —

Wholly a blessed time: when jargon might abate, and here and there some genuine speech begin. When to the noble opened heart, as to such heart they alone do, all noble things began to grow visible; and the difference between just and unjust, between true and false, between work and sham-work, between speech and jargon, was once more, what to our happier Fathers it used to be, *infinite*, — as between a Heavenly thing and an Infernal: the one a thing which you were *not* to do, which you were wise not to attempt doing; which it were better for you to have a millstone tied round your neck, and be cast into the sea, than concern yourself with doing! — Brothers, it will not be a Morrison’s Pill, or remedial measure, that will bring all this about for us.

And yet, very literally, till, in some shape or other, it be brought about, we remain cureless; till it begin to be brought about, the cure does not begin. For Nature and Fact, not Redtape and Semblance, are to this hour the basis of man’s life; and on those, through never such strata of these, man and his life and all his interests do, sooner or later, infallibly come to rest, — and to be supported or be swallowed according as they agree with those. The question is asked of them, not, How do you agree with Downing Street and accredited Semblance? ¹ but, How do you agree with God’s Universe and the actual Reality of things? This Universe *has* its Laws. If we walk according to the Law, the Law-Maker will befriend us; if not, not. Alas, by no Reform Bill, Ballot-box,

¹ Downing Street. The street in London on which the Treasury Building and Foreign Office are located; hence, the name Downing Street has come to be used for the Government.

Five-point Charter,¹ by no boxes or bills or charters, can you perform this alchemy: "Given a world of Knaves, to produce an Honesty from their united action!" It is a distillation, once for all, not possible. You pass it through alembic after alembic, it comes out still a Dishonesty, with a new dress on it, a new colour to it. "While we ourselves continue valets, how *can* any hero come to govern us?" We are governed, very infallibly, by the "sham-hero," — whose name is Quack, whose work and governance is Plausibility, and also is Falsity and Fatuity; to which Nature says, and must say when it comes to *her* to speak, eternally No! Nations cease to be befriended of the Law-Maker, when they walk *not* according to the Law. The Sphinx-question remains unsolved by them, becomes ever more insoluble.

If thou ask again, therefore, on the Morrison's-Pill hypothesis, What is to be done? allow me to reply: By thee, for the present, almost nothing. Thou there, the thing for thee to do is, if possible, to cease to be a hollow sounding shell of hearsays, egoisms, purblind dilettantisms; and become, were it on the infinitely small scale, a faithful discerning soul. Thou shalt descend into thy inner man, and see if there be any traces of a *soul* there; till then there can be nothing done! O brother, we must if possible resuscitate some soul and conscience in us, exchange our dilettantisms for sincerities, our dead hearts of stone for living hearts of flesh. Then shall we discern, not one thing, but, in clearer or dimmer sequence, a whole endless host of things that can be done. *Do* the first of these; do it; the second will already have become clearer, doabler; the second, third, and three-thousandth will then have begun to be possible for us. Not any universal Morrison's Pill shall we then,

¹ In 1838 the Radicals presented a petition to the House of Commons with the purpose of making Parliament representative of the people as a whole and not of a class. This petition, or People's Charter, as it was called, contained not five but six demands, or points: universal suffrage, annual parliaments, secret voting, abolition of property qualifications for members, payment of members, and equal electoral districts. The refusal of the petition led to organized agitation, called Chartism, which was not brought to a close until 1848.

either as swallows or as vendors, ask after at all; but a far different sort of remedies: Quacks shall no more have dominion over us, but true Heroes and Healers! . . .

CHAPTER XI

LABOUR

FOR there is a perennial nobleness, and even sacredness, in Work. Were he never so benighted, forgetful of his high calling, there is always hope in a man that actually and earnestly works: in Idleness alone is there perpetual despair. Work, never so Mammonish, mean, *is* in communication with Nature; the real desire to get Work done will itself lead one more and more to truth, to Nature's appointments and regulations which are truth.

The latest Gospel in this world is, Know thy work and do it. "Know thyself:" long enough has that poor "self" of thine tormented thee; thou wilt never get to "know" it, I believe! Think it not thy business, this of knowing thyself; thou art an unknowable individual: know what thou canst work at; and work at it, like a Hercules! That will be thy better plan.

It has been written, "an endless significance lies in Work;" a man perfects himself by working. Foul jungles are cleared away, fair seed-fields rise instead, and stately cities; and withal the man himself first ceases to be a jungle and foul unwholesome desert thereby. Consider how, even in the meanest sorts of Labour, the whole soul of a man is composed into a kind of real harmony, the instant he sets himself to work! Doubt, Desire, Sorrow, Remorse, Indignation, Despair itself, all these like helldogs lie beleaguering the soul of the poor dayworker, as of every man: but he bends himself with free valour against his task, and all these are stilled, all these shrink murmuring far off into their caves. The man is now a man. The blessed glow of Labour in him, is it not as purifying fire, wherein all poison is burnt up, and of sour smoke itself there is made bright blessed flame!

Destiny, on the whole, has no other way of cultivating us.

A formless Chaos, once set it *revolving*, grows round and ever rounder; ranges itself, by mere force of gravity, into strata, spherical courses; is no longer a Chaos, but a round compacted World. What would become of the Earth, did she cease to revolve? In the poor old Earth, so long as she revolves, all inequalities, irregularities disperse themselves; all irregularities are incessantly becoming regular. Hast thou looked on the Potter's wheel, — one of the venerablest objects; old as the Prophet Ezekiel¹ and far older? Rude lumps of clay, how they spin themselves up, by mere quick whirling, into beautiful circular dishes. And fancy the most assiduous Potter, but without his wheel; reduced to make dishes, or rather amorphous botches, by mere kneading and baking! Even such a Potter were Destiny, with a human soul that would rest and lie at ease, that would not work and spin! Of an idle unrevolving man the kindest Destiny, like the most assiduous Potter without wheel, can bake and knead nothing other than a botch; let her spend on him what expensive colouring, what gilding and enamelling she will, he is but a botch. Not a dish; no, a bulging, kneaded, crooked, shambling, squint-cornered, amorphous botch, — a mere enamelled vessel of dishonour! Let the idle think of this.

Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. He has a work, a life-purpose; he has found it, and will follow it! How, as a free-flowing channel, dug and torn by noble force through the sour mud-swamp of one's existence, like an ever-deepening river there, it runs and flows; — draining off the sour festering water, gradually from the root of the remotest grass-blade; making, instead of pestilential swamp, a green fruitful meadow with its clear-flowing stream. How blessed for the meadow itself, let the stream and *its* value be great or small! Labour is Life: from the inmost heart of the Worker rises his god-given Force, the sacred celestial Life-essence breathed into

¹ The reference to Ezekiel is inaccurate. Isaiah (xiv, 8), Jeremiah (xviii, 6), and St. Paul (*Romans* ix, 20, 21) use this figure, but it is not found in *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*.

him by Almighty God; from his inmost heart awakens him to all nobleness, — to all knowledge, “self-knowledge” and much else, so soon as Work fitly begins. Knowledge? The knowledge that will hold good in working, cleave thou to that; for Nature herself accredits that, says Yea to that. Properly thou hast no other knowledge but what thou hast got by working: the rest is yet all a hypothesis of knowledge; a thing to be argued of in schools, a thing floating in the clouds, in endless logic-vortices, till we try it and fix it. “Doubt, of whatever kind, can be ended by Action alone.”

And again, hast thou valued Patience, Courage, Perseverance, Openness to light; readiness to own thyself mistaken, to do better next time? All these, all virtues, in wrestling with the dim brute Powers of Fact, in ordering of thy fellows in such wrestle, there and elsewhere not at all, thou wilt continually learn. Set down a brave Sir Christopher¹ in the middle of black ruined Stone-heaps, of foolish unarchitectural Bishops, redtape Officials, idle Nell-Gwyn Defenders of the Faith;² and see whether he will ever raise a Paul’s Cathedral out of all that, yea or no! Rough, rude, contradictory are all things and persons, from the mutinous masons and Irish hodmen, up to the idle Nell-Gwyn Defenders, to blustering redtape Officials, foolish unarchitectural Bishops. All these things and persons are there not for Christopher’s sake and his Cathedral’s; they are there for their own sake mainly! Christopher will have to conquer and constrain all these, — if he be able. All these are against him. Equitable Nature herself, who carries her mathematics and architectonics not on the face of her, but deep in the hidden heart of her, — Nature herself is but partially for him; will be wholly against him, if he constrain her not! His very money, where is it to come from? The pious munificence of England lies far-scattered, distant, un-

¹ Sir Christopher Wren. A famous 17th century architect who rebuilt London after the great fire of 1666. His greatest work was St. Paul’s Cathedral.

² Nell Gwynn. Mistress of King Charles II, during whose licentious reign Sir Christopher labored. Defender of the Faith is a title borne by all English sovereigns.

able to speak, and say, "I am here;" — must be spoken to before it can speak. Pious munificence, and all help, is so silent, invisible like the gods; impediment, contradictions manifold are so loud and near! O brave Sir Christopher, trust thou in those, notwithstanding, and front all these; understand all these; by valiant patience, noble effort, insight, by man's-strength, vanquish and compel all these, — and, on the whole, strike down victoriously the last topstone of that Paul's Edifice; thy monument for certain centuries, the stamp "Great Man" impressed very legibly on Portland stone there! —

Yes, all manner of help, and pious response from Men or Nature, is always what we call silent; cannot speak or come to light, till it be seen, till it be spoken to. Every noble work is at first "impossible." In very truth, for every noble work the possibilities will lie diffused through Immensity; inarticulate, undiscoverable except to faith. Like Gideon¹ thou shalt spread out thy fleece at the door of thy tent; see whether under the wide arch of Heaven there be any bounteous moisture, or none. Thy heart and life-purpose shall be as a miraculous Gideon's fleece, spread out in silent appeal to Heaven; and from the kind Immensities, what from the poor unkind Localities and town and country Parishes there never could, blessed dew-moisture to suffice thee shall have fallen!

Work is of a religious nature: — work is of a *brave* nature; which it is the aim of all religion to be. All work of man is as the swimmer's: a waste ocean threatens to devour him; if he front it not bravely, it will keep its word. By incessant wise defiance of it, lusty rebuke and buffet of it, behold how it loyally supports him, bears him as its conqueror along.

¹ *The Book of Judges*, vi, 36-38. "And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by my hand, as thou hast said, Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be upon the fleece only, and it be dry upon the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by my hand. And it was so; for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water."

"It is so," says Goethe, "with all things that man undertakes in this world."

Brave Sea-captain, Norse Sea-king, — Columbus, my hero, royallest Sea-king of all! it is no friendly environment this of thine, in the waste deep waters; around thee mutinous discouraged souls, behind thee disgrace and ruin, before thee the unpenetrated veil of Night. Brother, these wild water-mountains, bounding from their deep bases (ten miles deep, I am told), are not entirely there on thy behalf! Meseems *they* have other work than floating thee forward: — and the huge Winds, that sweep from Ursa Major to the Tropics and Equators, dancing their giant-waltz through the kingdoms of Chaos and Immensity, they care little about filling rightly or filling wrongly the small shoulder-of-mutton sails in this cockle-skiff of thine! Thou art not among articulate-speaking friends, my brother; thou art among immeasurable dumb monsters, tumbling, howling wide as the world here. Secret, far off, invisible to all hearts but thine, there lies a help in them: see how thou wilt get at that. Patiently thou wilt wait till the mad South-wester spend itself, saving thyself by dexterous science of defence, the while: valiantly, with swift decision, wilt thou strike in, when the favouring East, the Possible, springs up. Mutiny of men thou wilt sternly repress; weakness, despondency, thou wilt cheerily encourage: thou wilt swallow down complaint, unreason, weariness, weakness of others and thyself; — how much wilt thou swallow down! There shall be a depth of Silence in thee, deeper than this Sea, which is but ten miles deep: a Silence unsoundable; known to God only. Thou shalt be a Great Man. Yes, my World-Soldier, thou of the World Marine-service, — thou wilt have to be *greater* than this tumultuous unmeasured World here round thee is: thou, in thy strong soul, as with wrestler's arms, shalt embrace it, harness it down; and make it bear thee on, — to new Americas, or whither God wills! ¹

¹ Cf. with this magnificent paragraph the following from Carlyle's *Frederick the Great*, xi. 1: "Doubtless it was the Atlantic Ocean that carried Columbus to America: lucky for the Atlantic, and for Columbus

CHAPTER XII

REWARD

. . . Older than all preached Gospels was this unpreached, inarticulate, but ineradicable, forever-enduring Gospel: Work, and therein have wellbeing. Man, Son of Earth and of Heaven, lies there not, in the innermost heart of thee, a Spirit of active Method, a Force for Work; — and burns like a painfully smouldering fire, giving thee no rest till thou unfold it, till thou write it down in beneficent Facts around thee! What is immethodic, waste, thou shalt make methodic, regulated, arable; obedient and productive to thee. Wheresoever thou findest Disorder, there is thy eternal enemy; attack him swiftly, subdue him; make Order of him, the subject not of Chaos, but of Intelligence, Divinity and Thee! The thistle that grows in thy path, dig it out, that a blade of useful grass, a drop of nourishing milk, may grow there instead. The waste cotton-shrub, gather its waste white down, spin it, weave it; that, in place of idle litter, there may be folded webs, and the naked skin of man be covered.

But above all, where thou findest Ignorance, Stupidity, Brute-mindedness, — yes, there, with or without Church-tithes and Shovel-hat, with or without Talfourd-Mahon Copyrights,¹ or were it with mere dungeons and gibbets and crosses, attack it, I say; smite it wisely, unweariedly, and rest not while thou livest and it lives; but smite, smite, in the name of God! The Highest God, as I understand it, does audibly so command thee; still audibly, if thou have

and us; but the Atlantic didn't quite vote that way from the first: nay, *its* votes, I believe, were very various at different stages of the matter. This is a truth which kings and men, not intending to be drift logs or waste brine obedient to the Moon, are much called to have in mind withal, from perhaps an early stage of their voyage."

¹ The Talfourd-Mahon copyright bill was introduced by Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd in 1837, was rejected for a time, but eventually passed, as remodelled by Lord Mahon and Macaulay in 1842, the year before the publication of *Past and Present*.

ears to hear. He, even He, with his *unspoken* voice, awfuller than any Sinai thunders or syllabled speech of Whirlwinds; for the SILENCE of deep Eternities, of Worlds from beyond the morning-stars, does it not speak to thee? The unborn Ages; the old Graves, with their long-mouldering dust, the very tears that wetted it now all dry, — do not these speak to thee, what our ear hath not heard? The deep Death-kingdoms, the Stars in their never-resting courses, all Space and all Time, proclaim it to thee in continual silent admonition. Thou too, if ever man should, shalt work while it is called To-day. For the Night cometh, wherein no man can work.

All true Work is sacred; in all true Work, were it but true hand-labour, there is something of divineness. Labour, wide as the Earth, has its summit in Heaven. Sweat of the brow; and up from that to sweat of the brain, sweat of the heart; which includes all Kepler calculations, Newton meditations,¹ all Sciences, all spoken Epics, all acted Heroisms, Martyrdoms, — up to that “Agony of bloody sweat,” which all men have called divine! O brother, if this is not “worship,” then I say, the more pity for worship; for this is the noblest thing yet discovered under God’s sky. Who art thou that complainest of thy life of toil? Complain not. Look up, my wearied brother; see thy fellow Workmen there, in God’s Eternity; surviving there, they alone surviving: sacred Band of the Immortals, celestial Bodyguard of the Empire of Mankind. Even in the weak Human Memory they survive so long, as saints, as heroes, as gods; they alone surviving, peopling, they alone, the unmeasured solitudes of Time! To thee Heaven, though severe, is *not* unkind; Heaven is kind, — as a noble Mother; as that Spartan Mother, saying, while she gave her son his shield, “With it, my son, or upon it!” Thou too shalt return *home* in honour; to thy far-distant Home, in honour; doubt it not, — if in the battle thou keep thy shield! Thou, in the Eternities and

¹ Kepler, one of the chief founders of modern astronomy; Newton, famous English mathematician and natural philosopher, follower of Kepler.

deepest Death-kingdoms, art not an alien; thou everywhere art a denizen! Complain not; the very Spartans did not *complain*.

And who art thou that braggest of thy life of Idleness; complacently showest thy bright gilt equipages; sumptuous cushions; appliances for folding of the hands to mere sleep? Looking up, looking down, around, behind or before, discernest thou, if it be not in Mayfair¹ alone, any *idle* hero, saint, god, or even devil? Not a vestige of one. In the Heavens, in the Earth, in the Waters under the Earth, is none like unto thee. Thou art an original figure in this Creation; a denizen in Mayfair alone, in this extraordinary Century or Half-Century alone! One monster there is in the world: the idle man. What is his "Religion"? That Nature is a Phantasm, where cunning beggary or thievery may sometimes find good victual. That God is a lie; and that Man and his Life are a lie. — Alas, alas, who of us *is* there that can say, I have worked? The faithfulest of us are unprofitable servants; the faithfulest of us know that best. The faithfulest of us may say, with sad and true old Samuel, "Much of my life has been trifled away!"² But he that has, and except "on public occasions" professes to have, no function but that of going idle in a graceful or graceless manner; and of begetting sons to go idle; and to address Chief Spinners and Diggers, who at least *are* spinning and digging, "Ye scandalous persons who produce too much" — My Corn-Law friends, on what imaginary still richer Eldorados, and true iron-spikes with law of gravitation, are ye rushing!

As to the Wages of Work there might innumerable things be said; there will and must yet innumerable things be said and spoken, in St. Stephen's³ and out of St. Stephen's; and

¹ Mayfair. The fashionable residential section of London.

² Dr. Samuel Johnson, who in his letters, journals, prayers and meditations, and recorded conversations constantly bewails his own idleness and indolence.

³ See note 4, p. 11.

gradually not a few things be ascertained and written, on Law-parchment, concerning this very matter: — “Fair day’s-wages for a fair day’s-work” is the most unrefusable demand! Money-wages “to the extent of keeping your worker alive that he may work more;” these, unless you mean to dismiss him straightway out of this world, are indispensable alike to the noblest Worker and to the least noble!

One thing only I will say here, in special reference to the former class, the noble and noblest; but throwing light on all the other classes and their arrangements of this difficult matter: The “wages” of every noble Work do yet lie in Heaven or else Nowhere. Not in Bank-of-England bills, in Owen’s Labour-bank, or any the most improved establishment of banking and money-changing, needest thou, heroic soul, present thy account of earnings. Human banks and labour-banks know thee not; or know thee after generations and centuries have passed away, and thou art clean gone from “rewarding,” — all manner of bank-drafts, shop-tills, and Downing-street Exchequers lying very invisible, so far from thee! Nay, at bottom, dost thou need any reward? Was it thy aim and life-purpose to be filled with good things for thy heroism; to have a life of pomp and ease, and be what men call “happy,” in this world, or in any other world? I answer for thee deliberately, No. The whole spiritual secret of the new epoch lies in this, that thou canst answer for thyself, with thy whole clearness of head and heart, deliberately, No!

My brother, the brave man has to give his Life away. Give it, I advise thee; — thou dost not expect to *sell* thy Life in an adequate manner? What price, for example, would content thee? The just price of thy LIFE to thee, — why, God’s entire Creation to thyself, the whole Universe of Space, the whole Eternity of Time, and what they hold: that is the price which would content thee; that, and if thou wilt be candid, nothing short of that! It is thy all; and for it thou wouldst have all. Thou art an unreasonable mortal; — or rather thou art a poor *infinite* mortal, who, in thy narrow clay-prison here, *seemest* so unreasonable! Thou

wilt never sell thy Life, or any part of thy Life, in a satisfactory manner. Give it, like a royal heart; let the price be Nothing: thou *hast* then, in a certain sense, got All for it! The heroic man, — and is not every man, God be thanked, a potential hero? — has to do so, in all times and circumstances. In the most heroic age, as in the most unheroic, he will have to say, as Burns said proudly and humbly of his little Scottish Songs, little dewdrops of Celestial Melody in an age when so much was unmelodious: “By Heaven, they shall either be invaluable or of no value; I do not need your guineas for them!” It is an element which should, and must, enter deeply into all settlements of wages here below. They never will be “satisfactory” otherwise; they cannot, O Mammon Gospel, they never can! Money for my little piece of work “to the extent that will allow me to keep working;” yes, this, — unless you mean that I shall go my ways *before* the work is all taken out of me: but as to “wages” — ! —

CHAPTER XIII

DEMOCRACY

... Life was never a May-game for men: in all times the lot of the dumb millions born to toil was defaced with manifold sufferings, injustices, heavy burdens, avoidable and unavoidable; not play at all, but hard work that made the sinews sore and the heart sore. As bond-slaves, *villani*, *bordarii*, *sochemanni*,¹ nay indeed as dukes, earls and kings, men were oftentimes made weary of their life; and had to say, in the sweat of their brow and of their soul, Behold, it is not sport, it is grim earnest, and our back can bear no more! Who knows not what massacings and harryings there have been; grinding, long-continuing, unbearable injustices, — till the heart had to rise in madness, and some “*Eu Sachsen, nimith euer sachs*es, You Saxons, out with your gully-knives, then!” You Saxons, some “arrestment,” partial “arrestment of

¹ Persons holding land under the feudal system and owing certain kinds of menial service to their lords.

the Knaves and Dastards" ¹ has become indispensable! — The page of Dryasdust is heavy with such details.

And yet I will venture to believe that in no time, since the beginnings of Society, was the lot of those same dumb millions of toilers so entirely unbearable as it is even in the days now passing over us. It is not to die, or even to die of hunger, that makes a man wretched; many men have died; all men must die, — the last exit of us all is in a Fire-Chariot of Pain. But it is to live miserable we know not why; to work sore and yet gain nothing; to be heart-worn, weary, yet isolated, unrelated, girt-in with a cold universal *Laissez-faire*: it is to die slowly all our life long, imprisoned in a deaf, dead, Infinite Injustice, as in the accursed iron belly of a Phalaris' Bull! ² This is and remains for ever intolerable to all men whom God has made. Do we wonder at French Revolutions, Chartisms, Revolts of Three Days? ³ The times, if we will consider them, are really unexampled.

Never before did I hear of an Irish Widow reduced to "prove her sisterhood by dying of typhus-fever and infecting seventeen persons," — saying in such undeniable way, "You see, I was your sister!" Sisterhood, brotherhood, was often forgotten; but not till the rise of these ultimate Mammon and Shotbelt Gospels did I ever see it so expressly denied. If no pious Lord or *Law-ward* ⁴ would remember it, always some pious Lady ("*Hlaf dig*," Benefactress, "*Loaf-giveress*,"

¹ Cf. *Past and Present*, i. 6: "We will say with the poor Frenchman at the Bar of the Convention: "*Je demande l'arrestation des coquins et des lâches*." Ah, we know what a work that is; how long it will be before they are all or mostly got "arrested": — but here is one; arrest him in God's name; it is one fewer! . . . We can begin by arresting our own poor selves out of that fraternity of knaves and dastards. There is no other reform conceivable. Thou and I, my friend, can, in the most flunky world, make, each of us, *one* non-flunky, *one* hero, if we like: that will be two heroes to begin with!"

² Phalaris. Tyrant of Agrigentum, notorious for his cruelty — especially for his human sacrifices in a heated brazen bull.

³ Referring to the liberal revolution of 1830 in France, which took place July 28, 29, and 30.

⁴ Carlyle is often inaccurate in his etymology. *Lord* is the Old English *hlaf-weard*, loaf-keeper; *Lady*, the O. E. *hlaf-dig*, loaf-kneader.

they say she is, — blessings on her beautiful heart!) was there, with mild mother-voice and hand, to remember it; some pious thoughtful *Elder*, what we now call “Prester,” *Presbyter* or “Priest,” was there to put all men in mind of it, in the name of the God who had made all.

Not even in Black Dahomey was it ever, I think, forgotten to the typhus-fever length. Mungo Park,¹ resourceless, had sunk down to die under the Negro Village-Tree, a horrible White object in the eyes of all. But in the poor Black Woman, and her daughter who stood aghast at him, whose earthly wealth and funded capital consisted of one small calabash of rice, there lived a heart richer than “*Laissez-faire* :” they, with a royal munificence, boiled their rice for him; they sang all night to him, spinning assiduous on their cotton distaffs, as he lay to sleep: “Let us pity the poor white man; no mother has he to fetch him milk, no sister to grind him corn!” Thou poor black Noble One, — thou *Lady* too: did not a God make thee too; was there not in thee too something of a God! —

Gurth, born thrall of Cedric the Saxon,² has been greatly pitied by Dryasdust and others. Gurth, with the brass collar round his neck, tending Cedric’s pigs in the glades of the wood, is not what I call an exemplar of human felicity: but Gurth, with the sky above him, with the free air and tinted bosage and umbrage round him, and in him at least the certainty of supper and social lodging when he came home; Gurth to me seems happy, in comparison with many a Lancashire and Buckinghamshire man, of these days, not born thrall of anybody! Gurth’s brass collar did not gall him: Cedric *deserved* to be his Master. The pigs were Cedric’s, but Gurth too would get his parings of them. Gurth had the inexpressible satisfaction of feeling himself related indissolubly, though in a rude brass-collar way, to his fellow-mortals in this Earth. He had superiors, inferiors, equals. —

¹ Mungo Park (1771–1806). Famous African explorer, author of *Travels in the Interior of Africa*, 1799.

² In Sir Walter Scott’s *Ivanhoe*.

Gurth is now "emancipated" long since; has what we call "Liberty." Liberty, I am told, is a Divine thing. Liberty when it becomes the "Liberty to die by starvation" is not so divine!

Liberty? The true liberty of a man, you would say, consisted in his finding out, or being forced to find out, the right path, and to walk thereon. To learn, or to be taught, what work he actually was able for; and then by permission, persuasion, and even compulsion, to set about doing of the same! That is his true blessedness, honour, "liberty" and maximum of wellbeing: if liberty be not that, I for one have small care about liberty. You do not allow a palpable madman to leap over precipices; you violate his liberty, you that are wise; and keep him, were it in strait-waistcoats, away from the precipices! Every stupid, every cowardly and foolish man is but a less palpable madman: his true liberty were that a wiser man, that any and every wiser man, could, by brass collars, or in whatever milder or sharper way, lay hold of him when he was going wrong, and order and compel him to go a little righter. O, if thou really art my *Senior*, *Seigneur*, my *Elder*, *Presbyter* or *Priest*, — if thou art in very deed my *Wiser*, may a beneficent instinct lead and impel thee to "conquer" me, to command me! If thou do know better than I what is good and right, I conjure thee in the name of God, force me to do it; were it by never such brass collars, whips and handcuffs, leave me not to walk over precipices! That I have been called, by all the Newspapers, a "free man" will avail me little, if my pilgrimage have ended in death and wreck. O that the Newspapers had called me slave, coward, fool, or what it pleased their sweet voices to name me, and I had attained not death, but life! — Liberty requires new definitions.

APPENDIX

A

Selections from Emerson's *The Transcendentalist*, a lecture read in Boston in 1842:

. . . "What is popularly called Transcendentalism among us is Idealism; Idealism as it appears in 1842. As thinkers, mankind have ever divided into two sects, Materialists and Idealists; the first class founding on experience, the second on consciousness; the first class beginning to think from the data of the senses, the second class perceive that the senses are not final, and say, The senses give us representations of things; but what are the things themselves, they cannot tell. . . . The Materialist, secure in the certainty of sensation, mocks at fine-spun theories, at star-gazers and dreamers, and believes that his life is solid, and that he at least takes nothing for granted, but knows where he stands and what he does. Yet how easy is it to show him that he also is a phantom walking and working amid phantoms, and that he need only ask a question or two beyond his daily questions, to find his solid universe growing dim and impalpable before his sense." The sturdy capitalist, no matter how deep and square on blocks of Quincy granite he lays the foundation of his banking-house or exchange, must set it, at last, not on a cube corresponding to its structure, but on a mass of unknown materials and solidity, red-hot or white-hot perhaps at the core, which rounds off to an almost perfect sphericity, and lies floating in soft air, and goes spinning away, dragging both bank and banker with it at the rate of thousands of miles the hour, he knows not whither, — a bit of bullet, now glimmering, now darkling through a small cubic space on the edge of an unimaginable pit of emptiness.

B

Extract from Carlyle's *Life of Sterling*, Chapter 4:

Perhaps it was not the express set of arrangements in this or in any extant University that could essentially forward him, but only the implied and silent ones; less in the prescribed "Course of Study," which seems to lead nowhither, than in the generous (not ungenerous) rebellion against such prescribed course. . . . Nor can the unwisest "Prescribed Course

of Study" be considered quite useless, if it have incited you to try nobly on all sides for a course of your own. . . .

One benefit not to be dissevered from the most obsolete University still frequented by young ingenuous living souls, is that of manifold collision and communication with the said young souls; which, to every one of these coevals, is undoubtedly the most important branch of breeding for him. In this point the two English Universities — their studies otherwise being granted to be nearly useless, and even ill done of their kind — far excel all other Universities.

C

A similar defiance of the Everlasting No is finely expressed by W. E. Henley in his familiar poem in memory of R. T. H. Bruce. (Henley, *Echoes of Life and Death*, IV.)

Out of the night that covers me
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever Gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

Carlyle's Style - vivid, picturesque, dramatic action
short sentences, vigorous (action always moving)
repetition, emotional, color, poetic imagery.
irony, use of anecdote.

Characters - genuine, not - with, action - hesitant
strong - weak,

